

# JAPANESE GARDENS



MRS. BASIL TAYLOR



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JAPANESE GARDENS

BY WALTER TYNDALE  
JAPAN AND THE JAPANESE





# J A P A N E S E G A R D E N S

BY

MRS. BASIL TAYLOR  
(HARRIET OSGOOD)

WITH TWENTY-EIGHT PICTURES IN COLOUR BY  
WALTER TYNDALE, R.I.

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TO  
EVELYN D. TYNDALE  
AND  
BASIL TAYLOR  
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED  
BY THE  
ARTIST AND THE AUTHOR





## PREFACE

ANOTHER book on Japanese gardens would need an apology, rather than a preface, were it not that Mr. Tyndale's beautiful pictures, to which my words are but as the tail to a soaring and many-coloured kite, have already made excuse unnecessary.

But I do not presume, in spite of my great love of, and admiration for, the most subtle and highly wrought art of landscape gardening that exists in the world to-day, to offer a technical treatise on the subject. That, Mr. Josiah Conder (who, perhaps I may be allowed to say, was to have written this book, but, owing to stress of work, was at the last unable to undertake it, so the privilege fell to me) has already so perfectly done, that those who wish for expert information must go to him for it.

But while I acknowledge most gratefully the help his books have been, and have quoted directly from them whenever the space at my

disposal allowed it, I do not present a complicated crib on the theme, which some one who has never seen a Japanese garden, nor even sniffed the strange, not over-sweet, odour of Japan at all, could do. I promise to intrude with the hideous technicalities, that only bristle for the subject on paper, as little as may be for a grasp of the ideas that are the foundation of the art. If, with the sympathy which I feel for all forms of Japanese art, and for this gentle one in particular, I can convey to others anything of the peace and restful charm, the delicate and fine delight, that a well-arranged Japanese garden can give (and they always are well-arranged, from the best to the poorest); if I can help the traveller to a little more understanding, which also means a greater pleasure, in them, or assist memory in recalling them; or, last to name, but first in reality, if I can add even a little to an appreciation of Mr. Tyndale's lovely garden studies, I shall be content.

I regret very much that I have not been able to retain the seasonal sequence of the illustrations. I have had to compromise by placing the pictures as nearly as possible in the order of the flowering time when they were painted, and where this was not possible with-

out a sacrifice to the intelligibility of the text, by referring the reader to other parts of the book. Also, I have not been able in technical descriptions to illustrate my meaning as often as I should like, and in such cases, where obscurity exists, I can only refer the reader to the clear and lucid descriptions, full of drawings and diagrams explaining them, in Mr. Josiah Conder's book on *Japanese Landscape Gardening*.

I must again acknowledge my indebtedness to this book, as well as to Miss Du Cane's delightful volume on the *Flowers of Japan*; also to my friend, Sir Francis Piggott, for the botanical names of many plants, as well as to Mr. Stephen Troyte Dunn of Kew, formerly of Hong-Kong, who has helped me in more ways than I can name. I owe much, also, to Professor Basil Hall Chamberlain, although I have had the impertinence to disagree with him often in his strictures on the various arts of the country, which he knows so much better than does any other foreigner. I should also speak of the late Mr. Arthur Lloyd of Tokio, probably the greatest home (foreign) authority on Buddhism, whose kindly talks no less than whose books have been a help to me. It would be absurd to include Lafcadio Hearn's beautiful tales and myths of Japan in this list, because it

goes without saying that anyone who goes to Japan, or who writes of anything Japanese, must have read them.

I have drawn on many other books both for facts and garden lore, but have acknowledged it always in the accompanying text, but as far as I know no other book on this exact topic—Japanese Gardens—exists.

While I do not mention them by name, my deep thanks are also due to numerous Japanese friends, made in Hong-Kong and London as well as during several long sojourns in their country, and to many garden owners, both rich and poor, peasant and noble, in that pleasant land, who, through the medium of mutual sympathy and enthusiasm, helped me to love and keenly to appreciate the beautiful results—as well as the art that created them—of the gardens of Japan.

HARRIET OSGOOD TAYLOR

HOLLAND LODGE, ADDISON ROAD

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“He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. Only as far as the masters of the world have called in Nature to their aid can they reach the height of magnificence.”

EMERSON

“Moreover, it tends to edify the heart if we plant trees and herbs in our garden, and love them.”—*Kaibara Yekken*

(W. G. Aston's Translation)



# JAPANESE GARDENS

## CHAPTER I

### ON JAPANESE GARDENS IN GENERAL

"Here in my leafy garden where I sit,  
Protected by the big trees, kind and green,  
I learn to love contentment more than wit,  
The lure of known things less than those unseen."

WHILE the gardens of the Japanese have much of material charm, of rich and plentiful vegetation, of rare and splendid as well as exquisite though less striking flowers, of gracious bodily attraction (if I may so name it), it is to the inner sense, to the mind and the heart, that they make their chiefest appeal. In its most real meaning a garden, to them, must be a place of repose, of contemplation, of spiritual communion with Nature. There can a man loaf, and invite his soul; and, though that soul may be shrivelled and shrunk to the dimensions of a withered Jerusalem Rose, it will swell and grow and blossom in the atmosphere of the place. The very shopkeeper who may have done you an ill turn in business (just as a

child with a stick hits you joyously and without malice) will retire to the tiny scrap of a place behind his premises, and, as if whirled away on the wonderful carpet of the *Arabian Nights*, he is another man, in another world, instantly; and, with all that is kindly and beautiful and poetic uppermost, he will contemplate his frail little Morning Glory in its pot, or tenderly lift his butterfly-winged babies up to watch the pretty, swift flashings of the goldfish in the basin. He no longer represents the somewhat sordid new Japan, which makes money by selling silk to foreigners; which so often models itself on the bad, not on the good side of their business methods. He is no longer the harassed innkeeper, the big mill-owner, the busy, important Government official; he has turned back the years, as one might the red petals of a Lotus—back to the golden heart of old Japan. He is the brave follower of the samurai, whose whole creed is keeping faith; or he is the samurai himself, a poet, though a soldier; or the great daimyo, who is an artist, though a courtier.

In the old days every common thing to a Japanese was hedged about with divinity. A god guarded each humblest tool, lived in every stone or stump, inspired the simplest act. A spirit was invoked of peace and joy by a man's putting himself in the attitude to receive it. He walked into his garden, and, as if he had rubbed his magic ring, the Djinn of the garden appeared to soothe,

to comfort, to bless. I once heard Bishop Brent, that most practical of spiritual men, in speaking to a congregation of sailors say that to put themselves *en rapport* with God and goodness was as easy as to turn a cock that let in the Pacific Ocean. So a Japanese enters into the peace that passeth understanding when he takes his weary body and tired mind, but open soul, into that place dedicated to peace. It is the survival of the Japanese garden, and all that the love of it still implies, which has saved Japan from being brutalized by improvement, from being crushed beneath the responsibility of transformation into a great Power, that has redeemed her from the curse that money-making brings. In the overturning of old ideals, while love of beauty and living things remains, Japan, thank God, can never grow into one of the sordid countries that the West knows so well.

But not only does the average Japanese bring with him the temperament to realise these delicate delights : the inspiration, the impulse to enjoy with the soul, as it were, is there before him. The artist who designed the grounds has already deliberately put it there, and, in these days, when mental suggestion has become almost a commonplace, it would be foolish to deny the possibility of such a sentiment persisting in a garden.

I dare say the reader may fancy this a far-fetched idea—both my interpretation and the



Japanese original notion, into which I am trying to put a mystical sense of poetry—but it is very literally true. The artist plans the grounds, after a study of the owner's personality and temperament, as well as of a very complete review of the capabilities of the place and of the material at hand to assist in the work. After this he decides—probably with the owner's help and largely biased by his wishes—on the style of garden that is to be evolved. Shall it be great and grand, a wonderful and striking artist's picture of some big and famous landscape, modified and altered, so that it is not merely a bald and otherwise unconvincing copy but an illuminating interpretation? Or shall it represent instead the last word in finished and elegant grounds with clipped trees and stone lanterns, and yet still, in its artificiality and careful finish, seeming only to suggest a richer phase of Nature? Or is it to be one of the many thousands of small gardens whose plot of ground, scarcely bigger than a tablecloth, has still the space to present one of the intimate, serene, and sweet little glimpses of water and stones and flowering tree that bring gladness into many of what would otherwise be such drab, colourless backyards, such grey and dingy lives?

I hope it is to be one of the last, for of all the many lovely things in Japan—high courage and patriotism, kindness and courtesy to the old and to the stranger, eternal cheerfulness and

## JAPANESE GARDENS IN GENERAL 5

eternal industry, gentleness to children and to birds and to all timid wild things—I think that one of the loveliest is their love of beauty, their insistence on it as one of the primary needs of life, and their belief in it as a moral and spiritual uplifter.

I remember a poor little dwarf, whose tiny house on the shores of Lake Hakone stood in front of, but did not conceal, such a scrap of a garden for the worship of Nature. How she had cursed him one knew, not only from his physical affliction, but by his wretched little half-witted child, a cretin, whose dull, hopeless eyes were so often seen at the cracks of the *shoji*.<sup>1</sup> But no, he was not even *half*-witted, this poor little creature, for he could not move about as other young animals can, nor make an intelligible sound. Nevertheless, his father, who might have been working all day in the hotel garden—the poor back, with its short legs, pitifully near the ground he was weeding—would, with his snatches of song, attract the child's attention before he reached his home, and would hold up the flowers he had brought for him, causing even those poor dull eyes to brighten a little. Never was that minute plot of earth less than well cared for; the little Azalea bushes were clipped, the stepping-stones were bright, the poor little shrine in a niche was tidy and well tended; and yet, handicapped by Nature, ugly and revolting to look at, poor, of a poverty we cannot guess, this

<sup>1</sup> Paper-covered sliding windows.

man had a poet's heart. The nation is great which even in the souls of the common people shews such gentle and beautiful ideas.

The thing that most struck me years ago when I first went to Japan, and even after repeated visits and an intimate acquaintance with many gardens, was, "What luck, what wonderful luck, these people have! They do not need to make their gardens: Nature has done it for them. It is not that they are so artistic in composing, but only so wise in not changing a single stone or tree from the place in which it was found." And still, after studying their methods of gardening, and knowing, from hard work on my own part, the intricacy and finesse of system that is brought to the subject by their landscape artists: after seeing a garden made—hill and stream and projecting rocks and overhanging trees, from an almost flat and perfectly bare and unwatered bit of ground—I find it hard not to think still—so natural is the result—that theirs is only the good taste which selects, not the artist mind which creates.

And so one feels that the garden *had* to be arranged as it was, because it would have been impossible to move the great boulders that are its backbone; that the lake and the trickling stream and the cascade must have been set there by the Divine Landscape Gardener Himself, and that the beautiful old trees had grown to that precision of shape and loveliness by the help

## JAPANESE GARDENS IN GENERAL 7

of Nature alone. We cannot believe that enormous sums have probably been paid for these stones, which may have been brought from hundreds of miles away (perhaps having been broken in pieces, marked, and stuck together again). We cannot understand how water, which, like the wind, goeth where it listeth, has had its bed of white stones built for it, and has been trained, as pet dogs are, to run and tumble and lie down at the will of the master. We cannot even understand, unless we have seen it done, that these age-old trees, and the young but sturdy blossoming ones, have perhaps been transplanted a few months before to this site. It is one of the constant wonders of this wonderful land that a new garden may, in so short a time, seem an old one.

If a rich man in Japan makes his house bigger, it goes without saying that he has to increase the size of his grounds, for, from least to largest, the one inflexible rule is to keep to scale in gardens and all surroundings. And this scale is not only one of size, of feet and inches; it means also character, sentiment, adornment: all must continue the idea, and work towards a harmonious whole. You would never find one part of a Japanese garden decorated with a Greek temple, approached by an Italian pergola, and surrounded by 'old-fashioned' flower-beds, as you might in home places. The whole garden would be subtly and delicately Japanese.

Wherever any ideas are taken from China—as so many have been—they are incorporated into the garden politic by a process of ‘benevolent assimilation’; they are no longer foreign, but indefinably though perfectly Japanese—of the soil, because the work of man attempts only a transcription of natural scenery. A well-known story bears on this point. A wealthy man in England had laid out, at great expense, what he fondly thought was a Japanese garden. There were grotesquely clipped trees, stone lanterns, a gimcrack pagoda, a creaking and unsafe moon-shaped bridge thrown across an arbitrarily trained stream of water. In his pride, the owner took a Japanese gentleman to see it, who innocently summed up his conventionally polite praise of the place by saying, “It is truly wonderful: I have never seen anything like it.” As much can be said of most Japanese gardens outside Japan. If the soul is absent, how can dead lips deliver a message?

The *nouveau riche* in Japan does not, as in Western lands, at once set up motor cars, and huge houses with swarms of servants, but he enlarges his garden, or gets new ones; and such absolute connoisseurs are even this class (and from them straight down to the lowliest coolie does the same innate good taste appear) that he may produce, as I say, in a few months or years, as the case may be, a garden fit to compare with the best in the land.



## JAPANESE GARDENS IN GENERAL 9

Almost incredible sums are paid for stones ; for trees, that are wonderfully transplanted, even when of great size ; for dwarf plants, for flower-pots, for particularly choice Chrysanthemums ; for specimen Irises ; for beautifully designed stone lanterns or bridges, or well-covers, or pagodas. A New York millionaire's trained architect or decorator could not more carefully consider and compare all the little details of ornament and design of the house, the appropriateness as to period and colour and make of the pictures, furniture, rugs, and bibelots with which he adorns it, than would a Japanese for his garden. Yet it is not this monetary value that makes their worth, but their appropriateness to the general scheme, the harmony each separate note brings to the whole. That may be valuable to one man which is worthless to another, and the priceless ornament useless to the owner of a simple garden.

In the Tempō Period (1830 to 1844) such great sums were spent on stones that an Imperial Edict was issued, restricting the amount that might be paid. Venice, in her opulent days, gave no greater sums for gold-decked gondolas ; and Holland, in spite of her thrift and her riches, was not so extravagant in the sums spent on Tulips as were the Japanese noblemen with their specimen Chrysanthemums, their Morning Glories, their Irises, and their garden stones. To this day no foreigner will pay what they will

spend for such things, because the one exquisite touch means less to us.

A Japanese, in his garden,—or in some one else's, perhaps,—sits in the particular spot allotted to him; in his own garden, on the Master's Stone; in another's, on the Guest's Seat of Honour, or on the Guest's Isle, and drinks in the beauty as though it were golden *saké*,<sup>1</sup> tasting each honeyed, burning drop as it goes down, but never satiated. Sometimes he sits—like an image of Buddha, with a sensual face, perhaps, but with a spiritual mind teaching him how to look—sunk absorbed in the peaceful scene before him, in a very Nirvana of happiness—not himself, it would seem, but part of the spirit of the place.

I remember once, at Shimonoseki,—which, together with Moji, makes the Liverpool and Manchester, the New York and Pittsburg, of Japan; busy, bustling, dreadful places from the Oriental point of view,—seeing a young man in contemplation before a Rose. It was in a little nursery garden to which we had found our way by back streets and rather foul alleys, in search of flowers to take on board ship, and a stone lantern for our garden in Hong-Kong. A poor little spot it was, and the old *Okka San*,<sup>2</sup> who seemed the only one in charge of the place, had no word of English, and could not understand the few we had of Japanese. A lean young man

<sup>1</sup> Native wine.

<sup>2</sup> House mistress.











of perhaps five-and-twenty was standing, or rather leaning, beside a framework of flower-pots, watching a Tea Rose open. My husband, who had already visited the spot before breakfast, had seen him there thus early, drooping before an opening flower, and said that he did not appear to have budged an inch since, though this was an hour or two later. He was pale and languid, and seemed so absorbed by his rosebud that, although he was evidently a gentleman (and they almost always speak a little English), we did not like to ask him to translate for us, until our negotiations for a beautiful stone lantern seemed likely to fall through because of no medium of tongues. But as soon as we had begged for his assistance he roused himself, and at once went off to find the master of the place and to bring him to us. They were so long away that finally we gave up in despair, and went off to a near-by temple to look around; but by great good luck we met our æsthetic friend again, the garden's master with him, returning to his preserves. This man, the master, spoke English, but, as even a small transaction takes an age in Japan (and this was a big one, for the lantern weighed nearly a ton), we negotiated for a good while: and all the time the visiting man of the pallid countenance stood in his grey kimono worshipping, oblivious of his surroundings, in front of his Rose.



And the recollection that counts for me of dusty, noisy, Western-imitating Shimonoseki is not of its bold and painted *nésans*<sup>1</sup> at the hotel ; not of its rough and boisterous boys ; not of its noise and rush and business ; not of our perilous passage across the straits, when we thought our little steam-launch would be carried out to sea, stone lantern and all, by the tremendous tide, and that we were about to be engulfed in the boiling tide-rips ; but of the quiet poet before his Rose.

For a garden in Japan may be only one flower in a pot, if its message, which is from God, is heard and understood by the god which is the divine spark in each human soul.

Japanese gardens have not only the fair external beauty of a pretty woman, of a rosy, dimpled child : they have the inner grace which makes its appeal to the heart long after colour has faded and the lustre and freshness of youth are past. They have the potential interest of the child, all youth's wondering, iridescent possibilities, added to the deep heart, the sympathetic power of the woman, and the strength, the virility, the tonic force of the fine and large-souled man.

If you find no more in a Japanese garden than the look, or the lack, of a pretty face, you have never learned its magic, you have not got at the true spirit of its conception.

<sup>1</sup> Literally "miss daughters," *i.e.* serving maids.

## CHAPTER II

### JAPANESE GARDENING HISTORY

"The stranger who has wandered far,  
The friend with welcome smile,  
All sorts of men who come and go,  
Meet at this mountain stile—  
They meet and rest awhile."

*A Hundred Verses from old Japan*  
(WM. N. PORTER)

THE history of Japanese landscape art, like that of its country, is one of the most interesting parts of an interesting subject, because so much myth, so much poetry is intermingled with its facts and its never dull prose. It is a very human art, and it is pleasant to think that priest and prince and pauper alike have all had a hand in the making of it. In the case of the pauper, this perhaps has been by the obedient following of the dictates of the masters, so hardening the rules; but, however this may be, all classes have, sooner or later, been concerned in it, and, if the next greatest man to him who utters a wise or beautiful thought is that one who repeats it, then these others have shown their greatness by appre-

ciation. Imitation has been the sincerest flattery.

The art of landscape gardening is said to have been introduced into Japan from India, via China; or, perhaps, from India, via China, via Korea, as so many of the Japanese arts are supposed to have come, but it seems more probable that Buddhism influenced religious sentiment—which, in its turn, had its effect on the arrangement of temple gardens, and, through those, on other gardens—than that Indian originals served in any concrete form as models. No one who knows the formality and regularity and artificiality of Indian gardens could seriously suppose those of the Japanese to be copies of them. And, in the same way, whatever they have taken from China—and all their arts came first from there—they have so adapted to their own needs and ideas, developed so much by their own genius, that they have evolved them into products wholly Japanese. It is almost as foolish to imagine that India or China created Japanese art influences as to say that, because Shakespeare took his plots from other writers and from other countries than his own, he is not the actual author of his plays; and that they are really Italian or French, as the case may be, because the post on which he flung the mantle of his world-enveloping genius happened to have come from this or that country.

Buddhism has undoubtedly been responsible



for more changes in things Japanese that count to the philosopher than has any other outward or moral force. The landing of Commodore Perry, and the subsequent development of Japan into a world Power, was as nothing compared with the all-pervasive sentiment which grew from this into the hearts, the religion, the very warp and woof of the national life, so that no one could say what issues had not been affected by it. But it did not change the people, their habits, their ideals; it simply grew into them.

And so the influence of China on Japan, of which we hear so much, was by suggestion rather than by setting her a formal copy. In painting, how far has Japan advanced since she first began to work along the same lines! Comparisons are odious, but, to instance language, although Japan has taken so many words bodily from the other yellow race,—almost all her gardening names are incorporated direct from them,—how she has turned these words from the hideous, chopped, hasty noise, all consonants, gutturals, and nasals, which it was, into musical sounds, liquid as Italian, only those who have heard both can say. In poetry (although Mr. Chamberlain speaks of it as puerile), how have the Japanese surpassed their masters, and given the world some of the most exquisite (even in translation), most poignant passages in any literature! While in gardening, how have they evolved, from a formal and pretentious Chinese model

(which is not without its charms, and here are Mr. Conder's 'quaint and fanciful conceits' if you will) the most spontaneous-seeming, perfectly balanced, and most fascinating art of landscape gardening in the world!

Mr. Conder tells us that the sixth century saw the introduction of Chinese ideas into Japan—in monasteries, of course; for priests, in every country, were the cultivators and earliest workers in all the arts. The Chinese originator is supposed to be Yohan Koan Han, who made great artificial hills, a hundred or more feet high ('Coal' Hill, near the Tartar City in Peking, is one of this sort), and brought water by pipes to form artificial lakes and ponds. Later, in the time of the 'Son' Dynasty, another artist, Chu - Men - Ton - Kwan, adorned other artificial rockeries of equal height with flowering trees and shrubs. But before this time the Japanese had a style of their own, called the *Shindai Shiki*, or the 'Imperial Hall' style, which shows that the impulse towards artistic gardening, together with a love of Nature, already existed. Although not much is known concerning it, except that the quadrangle, about three sides of which the palace was built, contained an irregular lake, with an island and a little bridge connecting it with the shore, and that a Plum and an Orange tree grew one on each side of the entrance to the hall, it is enough to show that formalism, even then,

did not reign any more than it does now. The palace to which I refer was that used for Imperial receptions, but unfortunately Mr. Conder, my authority, does not mention where it was situated.

The next great impulse to gardening, as well as to other arts, was during the Kamakura Period (from the middle of the twelfth to the beginning of the fourteenth century), when the Buddhist priests cultivated and refined it. To them, and not to the Chinese (although the names are of Chinese origin), belongs the credit of designating stones by fanciful names, and attributing sentiments and moral qualities to them. If thinking a thing so makes it so, then this charming and poetic idea well deserves its long-continued perpetuation. I cannot but prefer—even in this materialistic age when we are only just beginning to turn towards the influences of spiritual notions on hard, everyday things—a rock which rejoices in the name of the ‘Guardian Stone,’ and has its place and functions all prescribed for it, to an ordinary stone without a name or associations of any sort. To know something of geology, of botany, of any natural science, helps to interest the most casual walker or stroller in a garden: the artist is never bored by the quietest country life where he can find a picture (and he is not an artist if he cannot); and so, when it is remembered that, in addition to all these

gifts of the gods which the ordinary Japanese may bring to his garden love, he may also add the more human one of historical, or mythological (they are much the same thing to him), as well as poetical and ethical, ideas too, it is not to be wondered at that gardens are a national passion.

The priests, then (to go back to history again), ascribed imaginary religious and moral attributes to the grouping of the stones, a custom which has more or less survived to this day; and gave charming and poetic names, such as 'Cloud-shaped Island,' 'Pine-bark Island,' 'Spouting,' and 'Thread-Fall,' etc., to little islets (which, with lakes, were now considered indispensable) and to cascades. At that time there was a great insistence on the water part of a garden, whether as pond, flowing river, or leaping mountain cataract; but a little later the 'Dried-up-Water Scenery' came into vogue, and still remains a most popular method of indicating, if not the presence, at least the influence of water. Some of these examples are so charming and so convincing that I cannot pass them without a word or two more. Sometimes a dry cascade is formed, a rough-and-tumble torrent of grey and mossy green stones, which would almost make the observer believe that real water had but that moment ceased to fling itself headlong over them, or at least that a tiny stream still trickled there.

More often, however, the scene suggested is the shallow bed of a river, with round white pebbles, and a few of the more prominent prescribed rocks of classical rules, with perhaps also a pretty sandy beach which still shows the marks of the receding water, as if drought had but just overtaken it. Hills artificially arrived at, valleys and paths winding through natural-looking plantations, all help the effect and show the art, which reached its height under the direction of Soseki, a priest who flourished during the Muro Machi Period, in the fifteenth century. He laid down many rules which are still observed, although no treatise of his, so far as is known, remains.

At this time,—that of the Ashikaga Regents,—poetry, and those two arts which are so nearly allied to gardening, and which influenced it largely,—the Tea Ceremonial and Flower Arrangement,—also became popular. As more and more ceremony surrounded the dignified tea-drinking, the grounds about the room set apart for the purpose received greater attention too; and it was for this that the classic rules and standards of beauty became so fixed that, later, no man of taste dared to disagree with the opinions of the master, lest he should argue himself without taste; while an ugly design was declared by the experts ‘unlucky,’ so as to keep up the standard of the art. It is as if in our day a bold man might laugh at Dante,



and call the *Divine Comedy* 'all rot'! As if another Bernard Shaw might scoff at Shakespeare, and (chuckling with inward joy and amusement) declare himself his equal! As if another Robert Ingersoll should thunder out denunciations of the Bible, and jeer at Holy Writ.

Almost the only novelty which these great exponents of the art introduced were clipped shrubs and trees. While the shapes of these were never so exorbitantly ugly as those of the Dutch, they remain to this day, to my mind, the least attractive feature of Japanese gardens. This tree-clipping, one fancies, must have been introduced from Holland,—although it may have been the other way about,—for the Dutch were very early in the field, and at this time were more or less at home in Japan, where they introduced many European ideas. Or the Portuguese, who gained a footing there about this time, may have had something to do with it, for they certainly left their names, at least, behind them, as one can tell by the present pronunciation and spelling of many words.

The *Official Catalogue*, sent me from the Kyoto Commercial Museum, gives the history of landscape gardening so fully, though in such short measure, that, at the risk of repeating myself, I insert it verbatim, including spelling, which is not always that recognized:—

“ At first, when the Chinese style of archi-











itecture was adopted in Japan, especially in palace buildings, the gardens were quite independent of the buildings. It was so when the Emperor Kammu constructed a garden called Shizenen south of his palace in Kyoto. The traces of this fact can still be seen in the garden, though it has suffered some changes. During the Fujiwara Period, a style of architecture called *Shinden-zukuri* (*Shinden Shiki*) prevailed among the upper classes. It was at this time that gardens were laid out in connexion with buildings. Besides ponds, bridges, and other ornaments, small cottages called *Tsuridono* were introduced into the gardens.

“The influence of the Zen sect of Buddhism and of Tea Ceremony began to tell on the gardens and buildings, especially in the Ashikaga Era. It was from this time on that the garden was laid out in harmony with the buildings. This was a decided step towards the perfection of the art. Much credit is due the masters such as the priest named Muso (1276–1351), and Soami (1435–1490), who laid out the garden of Ginkakuji, still in excellent preservation, and Kobori Enshu (1579–1647), whose masterly works are still to be admired in Katsura-no-Rikyu, the detached palace at Katsura, Kodaiji, Daitokuji, Yubotan.

“Kyoto has many gardens of note in good preservation. They show the characteristic superiority of Japanese landscape gardening

in that each is so laid out that the distant natural scenery appears a part of it, giving the effect of unlimited expanse. Although the actual size of a garden may be but a small fraction of an acre, it is so constructed as to appear to extend to the distant hills."

Other great exponents of *Cha-no-yu* ('Tea Ceremony') became, because of the bearing of the one on the other, the veritable dictators of the art. Enshiu and Sen-no-Rikiu were the most famous. The latter is named with the great general patron of all the arts, Hideyoshi, for whom he designed many gardens, and who made him in return an abbot. However, even in Japan, the favour of princes is not to be depended on, for the poor man ended by having to commit *Hara-kiri*, when he was over seventy years of age. Sen-no-Rikiu's mandates have become law, but, as they are rules founded on common sense, as well as informed by poetical and ethical sentiment, they have deservedly been long-lived.

Kobori Enshiu has left many gardens to carry on his fame that, even in their present state of comparative neglect, are lovely as a poet's dream. The Konchi-in gardens of the Nanzenji Temple, the Kodaiji Temple grounds, and a part of the old Awata Palace, all in Kyoto, may be named as beautiful monuments of his artistic genius. The first is said by the



guide-books, through the arrangement of its important stones, to form the Chinese character or ideograph for 'heart' ( 心 ). Another, Mr. Conder tells us, is meant to suggest in miniature the Garden of Paradise; but each might be that.

While these temple and palace grounds are stately and rather formal, and of the highly finished style of composition, tea-gardens, which have most affected the artistic impulses of other gardens, have, as a rule, been kept wild, and more or less rough in character. Here is what the three greatest exponents of the art of landscape gardens and Tea Ceremonial have bequeathed to us as their ideals for a tea garden. Sen-no-Rikiu's was: "The lovely precincts of a secluded mountain shrine, with the red leaves of autumn scattered around." Enshiu's was: "The sweet solitude of a landscape in clouded moonlight, with a half gloom between the trees." Ogari Sotau's was: "A grassy wilderness in autumn, with plenty of wild flowers." All are different, but all are for Nature. Contrast these ideals (which are most assuredly put into practice by even modern garden makers in the Flowery Kingdom) with the gardens for tea that one sees in England—earwiggy places of toppling arbour and untidy formality, often enough: or with German, or German-American beer gardens or picnic grounds, with their noise, and plank tables, and smell of beer (and

humanity): or even with the open-air cafés of France and Italy, with the pathos of their vines, and their struggling plants in pots or tubs!

So, from the end of the fourteenth century for two hundred years, the 'Tea Garden' Style—or what might be called the 'Classical Japanese idea' of gardens—reigned supreme; and although the modern, more ornate, more artificial modes were adopted later (so that the extravagance and luxury in garden adornment had to be curbed by Imperial Edict near the middle of the last century), yet we see in this style a sweet and poetic interpretation of Nature which has grown into the bone and sinew of the art, and which is to this day the most persistent feature in their gardens. Just as Buddhism has grown into the very lives of the people, has mingled itself with their ancient Shinto religion,—so that, though you may be born a Shintoist, you must die a Buddhist,<sup>1</sup>—so these 'back-to-nature' ideas in gardening have grown into the innermost hearts of the people, rich and poor, wise and simple, and have become an expression of their character.

People are born poets and artists or they are not. In Japan generally they are; and even the mercenary and 'progressive' (save the

<sup>1</sup> The Buddhist ceremonial is almost invariably used for funerals, even among the most rigid Shintoists. Indeed, there is no Shinto funeral ceremony.

mark !) spirit of this mechanical, boiler-hammering, railway-laying, factory-building age cannot wholly wrest from them their inheritance. From history to prophecy: if ever it should, then the day that Japan ceases to love her gentle-spirited gardens, and to rejoice in their peace and their healing restfulness to the soul, that day also will she lose her love for children and youth ; she will lose her pity and her kindness, her art and her poetry, and with them her wonderful patriotism, her fearless courage, her strength and power in war, her steadfast devotion and self-sacrifice. She will lose all, in a word, that makes her not only greatest in the Orient, but one of the greatest nations in the whole world ; for these things are of the spirit, and when the spirit dies, the man, the nation, is doubly and eternally dead.

## CHAPTER III

### GARDENING PRINCIPLES

" Oh ! Adamant Art ! The Garden Artist says :  
Thus may you plant, and thus and thus may move.  
You love your garden, set in such strict ways ?  
My sweetheart's small, but limits not my love."

A N art whose only limits are those set by Nature herself is not a restricted one ; and, although a little study of the involved considerations of the Japanese landscape artist makes one suppose that it is too much hedged about by classic formalism to have any spontaneity or freshness left in it, a deeper scrutiny convinces one that the boundaries of this science are only those of Nature's own making. She is the fountain-head, the great teacher ; hers is the infallible pronouncement.

Put simply, landscape gardening in Japan is a reproduction, more or less reduced in scale, of the scenery of the surrounding country. This is its material foundation ; but, just as every scene from Nature, of whatever composition of rock and river and hedgerow, has its effect on the feelings and the imagination, so the Japanese



garden has, beneath the beautiful body that meets the eye, the æsthetic sentiment that is perceived only by the mind, the heart, the soul. This is the primary aim of a garden, not simply to tickle the eye, to display the owner's wealth, or to give a background to a garden fête, but definitely to suggest tranquillity or awe, homely pleasure and the simplicity of open country, or the exhilaration and inspiration of rugged and wild Nature.

And when so many people—Mr. Basil Hall Chamberlain among them—declare that they see nothing more in Japanese gardens than a certain charm of quaintness,—hardly more beauty than that of strangeness,—they simply announce that they see with the eyes only, and not with the true insight of the soul. I do not complain of them any more than I do of those unhappy mortals who are unable to find anything in the pictures of the old masters, who are bored by what is *not* called popular music, who cannot read those poets whose alchemy has changed the drab lead of life into the gold and iridescence of a dream.

Even Mr. Josiah Conder, who, by his great knowledge of the science of Japanese landscape gardening, has made himself almost its prophet, thinks that these gardens could not be transferred to another land and clime lest they might appear affected ‘examples of a quaint conceit.’ And yet I venture to say that if the most rigid

principles of the art were applied to the making of such gardens in Europe or America, omitting only the typical architectural adjuncts,—which are not essentials,—no one, although instantly struck by their quiet appeal to the heart, would consider them the product of a different and alien art and land. Unluckily, it is just those needless features which are reproduced, and the true principles of the science are disregarded—not even so much as the letter, much less the spirit being put there. But if a presentation informed by the real intentions of Japanese landscape gardening were offered, it would be a different thing. Such gardens would not be found unusual, except for beauty, and the sense of repose and tranquillity they might give. They would, after all, never appear as exotic as do the beautiful Japanese Lilies, golden-barred, and crimson-and-brown-freckled, and red, whose bulbs, imported in such large quantities by us, have now become a recognized feature in English gardens. They would soon be regarded like the many beautiful flowering trees and shrubs we cultivate nowadays, which only bear, or suggest, the description ‘japonica’ to the expert. Dwarf trees, except in flower-pots, cannot be considered typical of their gardens, as, if they are planted in the ground, they cannot be stunted. Trees twisted and bent into the curious, weird shapes that the Japanese gardener alone seems to know how to get, look as though

the hand of Nature, not of man, had wrought them into such strange lines of beauty. Of course these shapes are sometimes exaggerated, as who can say that Nature could thus often be at once so perverse and so kind—could, by the effect of age, and almost of deformity, give so many trees these lines of rugged strength, and such curves, or rather angles, of beauty?

If their art did not conceal its methods—if the eye could detect the craftsman in the artist—it would not pass muster as an art at all. Probably in our transplanted garden only the pounded-down, purple-brown earth, or the use of pebbles or drifted sand in place of green grass, would strike one as unusual, or as ‘quaint and fanciful in conceit.’

In the case of Mr. Chamberlain, I simply do not believe that he does not see. He is too deeply imbued with the very spirit of Japan not to see. He pokes mild ridicule at Japanese poetry, and even dissects it coldly, but he belies all this on the next page by a charming and sympathetic interpretation of those nearly untranslatable things, Japanese poems. So I believe his other strictures on their arts, which he always damns with faint praise, or dismisses finally as puerile; his dictum that their gardens may do well enough to please these pleasant children, but are hardly worth the grown-up consideration of the foreigner—are only the insistence of the Briton that whatever is British

is best, even when a little inward voice tells him plainly not to be too sure of that. I like this fine British scorn for any art that, even if it has not arisen on its island soil (and what art did ?) has not the sanction at least of long use there. It has taken thirty years for Whistler, —an American by birth and the acrid strength of him, though claimed by France for his art methods, and by England for his long residence there,—with his great power with the brush, and his stinging wit, to open the British eyes to the wonderful suggestion and beauty that lie in Japanese methods of painting ; and it will surely take more than another thirty years (unless such another prophet shall arise) before any writer or painter can do the same for Japanese gardens.

Already in America our great landscape artists—whether directly influenced by the Japanese or no I cannot pretend to say—have gone to the same authority—Nature—for inspiration. Central and Morningside Parks in New York, the Fens in Boston, as well as the Fells, a little farther away towards Malden, and a dozen other garden spaces in and about that city, Riverside Park in Philadelphia, and many others in the Western Cities, could be named as having bits of them arranged according to such ideals, even if their designers were not directly influenced by the study of Japanese garden principles. I say it steadily, and with a fairly

wide acquaintance with parks, public gardens, and pleasaunces all over the world, that the parks in the United States are the most beautiful to be found anywhere, because, like Japanese gardens, they base the science of their art on Nature. I do not include Japanese public parks, with the single exception of Ueno, and the remains of one or two others done in the old style, in Tokio, because, whenever they have laid out public grounds according to so-called modern Western methods, they are so vilely ugly that I prefer not to speak of them at all. As a matter of fact, wherever their landscape art has been affected by our ideas they have degenerated, and wherever our gardens have been inspired by the same fundamental ideas as their classical models it has been to their betterment. But, while I have not one word of praise for the mid-Victorian hideousness of their new official grounds and buildings, I feel serenely confident that such an artistic people must in time return to their own old ideals of the gardener's art. The feeling for the poetry of Nature, the sympathetic response to the appeal of natural beauty, is so great in the whole people, from Emperor to rickshaw coolie, that no amount of national pride—which thinks it ranks itself with the great nations of the West in assuming their bad taste—can for long be so misguided. Some of the delicate attention to detail will have gone with the replacing of hand and heart



labour by machine-made articles, but, in the stead of it, may come a breadth and bigness of effect and of outlook that is not, perhaps, now a distinguishing feature of their artistic expression. But we must return from the realms of prophecy as to the future of landscape gardening in Japan, and explain some of its guiding principles.

The one infallible and inexorable rule is that everything must be to scale, and that one part must never violate the laws of classic proportion by overweighting any other part. For instance, a small house, if it has not always a small garden, will admit no objects such as trees, lanterns, or any architectural features near it so much out of proportion as to send it out of its true place in the plan. Also, no greater finish is allowed in one part of the scheme than in another; the three grades of finish—rough, intermediate, and highly wrought—are always adhered to throughout. All ornaments, buildings, fences, stones, lake borders, even the shapes of trees and shrubs, must harmonize in this respect. As a consequence, even the detractors of Japanese gardens have to confess that in no others is there a more assured sense of unity and of harmony of purpose.

The garden is planned from all points of view, and the scene from Nature from which it is a reduced but never literal transcript has been sketched and mapped and *forgotten* before it can be revived again. It may be that a small-

sized copy of some famous scene has been chosen, —for the landscape artist loves to hitch his wagon to a star,—just as we might, if imitating some one else, pick on a great man, or a very noble and charming woman. The only difference would be that we should probably hit on some angularity of character, some extravagance that seemed to make for individuality,—for how often are bad manners copied because they are the unhappy endowment of a famous politician, or of a duchess, or a well-known beauty!—instead of eliminating the ugly details, as the Japanese does in his landscape picture, using only those salient features that will at once adorn the place and yet carry on the real spirit of the model.

All this having been done, the pattern is fitted to the cloth, and carefully cut, having had its design already modified, according to the size and character of the ground, and—though this is of less importance—due consideration having been given to such stones and lanterns and existing trees as the owner may have on hand, and may wish to use. Of course, this has all been studied out beforehand, and the artist has taken as his *leitmotiv* the best thing—whether lake, or waterfall, or rocky hill—he finds there. If the place commands a view (only it seldom does, except in miniature, as they build in valleys mostly, and leave the hill-tops for temples), then the garden is made the foreground,



as it were, so as to seem to take possession of the whole thing.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the ground is flat, and a scene including hills, a tumbling cascade, or a lake is desired—for the ideal landscape includes water scenery in combination with land and trees. If hills are wanted, they and the hollows for valleys are first made, and then the lake bed, or the pebbly trough for the brook, is dug. Fujiyama's cone, sometimes a mere doll's plaything, is included in the representation of this favourite scene. The scale of comparative size diminishes from a goodly sized Fuji, two hundred feet high, to the little porcelain ones used in the tea-plate garden.

Exposure, or what comes to more than that, for it includes the idea of moral influences from different quarters (the *Fung Shui* of the Chinese), is a most important point to be considered. It is unlucky, literally as well as superstitiously, to face North, because of evil spirits, and evil, biting winds. The West is also taboo, unless, as sometimes happens, Fuji or some other well-loved mountain can be seen from that side, for the summer sun from that quarter burns and parches. The Southern exposure, as in most other places in the Northern Hemisphere, is the most desired, as it provides the warm sun in winter, the cool breeze in summer,

<sup>1</sup> The accompanying picture of Mr. Blow's garden on a hill-side in Kyoto is an example of this. Even the Yasaka Pagoda seems a part of the same domain.









and the kind and pleasant influences that come with it. Next after that the East is considered lucky, for its sun in the mornings in winter is the warmest, and in the summer the least trying. Water, too, must come from these directions. I thought it only a coincidence at first that the little streams which irrigate and adorn more than half the gardens of Japan did this, until I saw a lusty brook being diverted and coaxed, apparently uphill, in order to have it run from South to North, so that it might not bring into the place the goblins and adverse influences of the North !

The gardens are almost always at the back of the house, for seclusion, and the best rooms face upon them. As the garden is a sanctuary, the private chapel, the religious retreat of the family, as well as its place of pleasure and relaxation, it can readily be seen that the adornment of the street, at which the altruistic American ' front yard ' aims, is not considered.

One of the constantly repeated fallacies about the Japanese is that they have no idea of perspective. While it cannot be claimed that in drawing with pen or brush they always respect its laws, no landscape artists in the world lay more stress upon it in the making of their outdoor pictures, their gardens. There are two well-known schools of perspective which are employed. One sets the big trees and ornaments, such as lanterns, pagodas, bridges,



etc., in the foreground (that is, near the house), putting smaller ones farther off so that they appear to be getting smaller as they recede into the distance. This might be called the scientific school, and its method was employed by the famous master of the 'Tea-Drinking Ceremony' (*Cha-no-ya*) and of landscape gardening (*Sen-no-Rikiu*). It is very successful, especially in small gardens, where big trees at the back of the premises would make its boundaries more pronounced, and would seem to shut the place in. In this plan distant hills are smaller than near ones, but the artificial water, because it is flat, and lowers the look of the land about it, is higher in the background, so as to send this farther off. This is called the 'Distance-lowering Style.'

The opposite, which might be considered the natural Perspective School, is called the 'Distance-raising Style'; it places its small things in the front, and lets distance and Nature herself lower the size and create the perspective for the larger objects and big trees on the horizon line. Even in a small garden there is something to be said for this plan; the eye is carried on and up, so that it gives a sense of more beyond. It is, however, best suited to large grounds, where big scenic effects are aimed at. Furuba Oribe was the prophet of this method. In either style the paths would turn and twist, the stepping-stones be laid at delightful



angles in attractive groups; for even the tyro knows that a curved road seems—and is—longer than a straight one.

As so much of the foundation of this art is to get the effect of natural scenery, it is essential to work always towards the object of making the garden appear larger than it really is; for most gardens are small, and even the big ones want to look bigger, and to suggest stretches of scenery. To attain this, other rules of art enter: horizontal objects are placed in front of standing ones—as a ‘Recumbent Stone’ beside a ‘Statue Rock,’ or a Standard lantern; a smooth stretch of turf (if it is used) set off by a group of trees; or a lake nestling beneath a rocky hill.

Japanese artists declare that it is far easier to design a big than a small garden; and one can see that the balance of value in the microscopic garden becomes so delicate that apothecary’s scale would, figuratively, have to be used. The large garden can afford big open spaces, the relief of plainness to the eye tired by a complexity of objects of interest, but small ones must, by infinite detail, give the effect of size; just as a little woman in a dress with a big floral pattern upon it seems fatter and larger, while a big woman in a plain dark colour seems to reduce her dimensions, so the least scrap of a garden, by a multiplicity of points of interest, carrying attention from one spot to another,

appears to gain in breadth and size. Again, as lengthwise stripes give height, so plantations of slender trees carry the eyes of the mind up, and by their columns, one behind the other on-wards, give distance and, that best thing of all, mystery.

But with all this attention to detail, to a complex and intricate appeal to the sight, and in spite of the national passion for the look of age, no litter or untidiness is ever permitted. Lichens and weather stains, which a Japanese gardener will take any amount of pains to get, must not imply disorder; the natural decay of wood, which is so beautiful, must not go so far as rottenness, or imperil the safety of the object for which it is used; velvety mosses must not suggest uncleanness or neglect. Just as in houses everything is scrupulously clean and well cared for, so in gardens no slovenliness is permitted. Although water is so freely used, and the hardly pounded earth, that takes the place of our grass, is always kept cool and damp with constant sprinkling, no puddles are allowed, no mud may exist for more than an hour or two.

Coolness is a great desideratum, and shady Wistaria-covered arbours and rustic pavilions are often seen, while trees are trimmed to afford shade as much as for beauty. But shadows and coolness, however much desired, are not obtained by overcrowding. The relief of open

spaces must always be given, no matter how small the trees have to be kept to ensure this.

I remember a lovely garden at Karuizawa, where the British Ambassador's wife spent a summer, which, to the Japanese idea, was ruined because of neglect in this point. The plan had doubtless been all right in the beginning, but, as the place was let to foreigners, less pains were taken to keep its values right, and the trees grew too big, and open spaces were crowded. Even to our ideas the trees and shrubbery were too close to the house, stifling it, keeping out the breeze, and harbouring insects in their damp shadows. All these errors brought it strikingly home to one who battled with mosquitoes at tea on the lawn how right Japanese gardening principles are, even from their and our different view-points.

One idea of theirs, with regard to trees, might be adopted by the foreigner who wishes to have it appear that he owns more country than is really his. If vegetation of a distinct and characteristic sort is seen beyond a man's limits, he at once plants other trees of the same sort on his ground, so that it looks as if all were part of his own domain. And if one rare tree were found at a distance from the house, another would be planted near, to give a 'family' look to it. But this does not cause a cheapening of effect by too much repetition. It is exactly a parallel of the method of a painter

who repeats a striking note of colour in diminishing in the distance, so as to heighten its telling qualities in the foreground. The Japanese says, just as our painters do, that the important parts are the back- and fore-grounds, and that the middle distances can take care of themselves.

But, however rigid garden rules may appear, there is always in them a delightful elasticity in their application, a really wonderful individuality in the carrying out of them. Faces have each a nose, a pair of eyes, and a mouth, hair, ears, teeth, but who shall say that their only difference occurs in the loss of one of these features? Let no man chafe at the laws, then, for without laws there is licence, ugliness, death, instead of re-birth in decay. Nature, who seems so lawless, so untrammelled, is the most relentless mistress man can have. But if she is severe, she is tender; if cruel, she is altogether lovely, and so, in their bending to her rules, are Japanese gardens.

Maurice Hewlett makes one of his characters say somewhere that "Horticulture is, next to music, the most sensitive of the fine arts. Properly allied to Architecture, garden making is as near as a man may get to the Divine functions."

And the Japanese are very near!













## CHAPTER IV

### GARDEN STONES

“ So wise was Buddha’s prophet in old days,  
He spoke, and lo !  
The very stones which Nature locks  
In silence, listened, and to give him praise,  
The great gods changed them into living rocks.”  
*Old Japanese Legend*

A T first glance it would seem rather absurd to devote a whole chapter to stones, since this book does not pretend to go into the geology of Japan, or even into that of its gardens only ; but to slight this subject would be as if, in one’s study of the human body, one neglected the skeleton. The rocks and stones of a garden in Japan are its bones and ribs. Its muscles, nervous system, veins and arteries, and beautiful outer covering of flesh, are its trees and shrubs, its watercourses, pools and wells, its flowering plants. I cannot quote Walt Whitman and say, as he did to the child who asked, “ What is the grass ? ”—“ And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves,” because a lawn is, more often than not, absent from a Japanese garden, and hard-

beaten, purply red earth, or finely raked sand, or beautifully patterned gravel, takes its place. From a plan of the distribution and situation of its principal stones an expert could determine, as scientific men make up the picture of a prehistoric beast from a few bones, the character—I had almost said the age and sex—of the garden, but that would be hardly accurate, as some of the bones are masculine and some feminine, and both come into the same plan, the one to strengthen, the other to soften and beautify the whole.

But if I do not go into the geology of the country it does not mean that the landscape gardener has not done so. He has studied it in a very thorough way, and has applied with a most careful and subtle art the deductions he has drawn from his observations. As usual, in this subject as in that of any other art or craft in Japan, there are classical rules made by the masters of their profession which are founded upon perfectly scientific principles, as well as upon æsthetic ones, handed on and rigidly adhered to by those who come after. But although the rules are rigid, much latitude is not only allowed, but almost demanded, in the carrying out of details. For it must never be forgotten in anything bearing on this subject of landscape gardening in Japan, that the first and greatest master is Nature. As the idea is, primarily, to present an interpretation of

Nature—a transcription, but not a literal copy—so licence within certain limits is allowed. The great brute force of Nature, however, is acknowledged to be capable of effects stupendous, extraordinary, even *unnatural*, that a man would be a fool to try to imitate. Rocks, for instance, that in mountain scenery frowningly overhang a valley, like the shaggy eyebrows of a stern and scowling god, are not copied by the landscape artist, because they would give the observer a sense of insecurity, exactly opposite to the effect which the natural object has. Balanced rocks, and gigantic boulders poised on insecure-looking foundations, are also barred, and rightly, from the garden, although they are immensely admired, perhaps even worshipped, in Nature. Rocks which are larger at the top than at the bottom would not be employed, for the same reason. Those with distorted tops, twisted, seamed, or with holes in their sides, are called ‘Diseased Stones,’ and should not be—although I fear occasionally they are—admitted into a proper garden. Vertical stones which more or less resemble the human body (what the Japanese call *Taidoseki*, and Mr. Conder translates as ‘Statue Stones’) are never, if they have fallen flat instead of standing upright, permitted in a well-conducted garden. They call them ‘Dead Stones,’ and they instil life into them by setting them up on end, or else oust them altogether.

The Japanese in no way resemble the ancient Romans in wanting a skeleton at the feast, or a skull crowned with roses and filled with wine. They never, as most Western nations do, even make their cemeteries into parks, where young lovers may wander, and mingle present hopes with past sorrows, sentiment with grief. Gardens are for contemplation, recreation, communion with Nature and one's own soul, and into them death, except as it comes in the falling petal, the withered leaf, the flaming embers of the dying fires of the Maple, is not permitted to intrude.

I never saw a pet dog's grave, or even that of one of their little friends the birds, in a Japanese garden, though I know of many such fondly loved spots, in stately as well as humble gardens, in my two homelands, America and England.

Stones which have a haphazard appearance, which fulfil no useful purpose, either as stepping-stones or in carrying out the design of the artist, are called 'Poor Stones.' They are treated with far scantier courtesy than are poor relations in this kind and pleasant land, for they are incontinently cast forth if they cannot be fitted into the family of rocks in the garden, or if they cannot be made to do their share towards its uses or pleasures.

There is never any Early Victorian profusion of unmeaning alleged ornament in these little

paradises. Like the exquisite simplicity of a Japanese room, each stone has a certain use, a certain meaning, a certain sentiment attached to it. It usually fills a double purpose, and is of use as well as a thing of beauty; for although, if any people ever did believe that beauty is its own excuse for being, these do, they make their beautiful things useful, and their useful things are invariably beautiful.

Again, as in all this gentle people's arts, the most delicate and perfect sense of proportion prevails. Large stones and boulders are for large gardens, for big scenic effects; small stones for small and intimate scenes. The same careful grading is again observed as regards the number of stones employed. In a large garden there are a hundred and thirty-eight principal rocks and stones (as well as others not so important), all named and classified, which may be employed, according to size and scope. This number reduces itself, until it reaches, in a tiny garden, —and there are thousands of them in this land, where every one, rich and poor, has something of the kind,—what is practically the irreducible minimum, five.

This sounds perhaps arbitrary and artificial —as who should say of one of the usually horrible montrosities which we call a 'rockery' or a 'rock grotto' that it may contain so many rocks, of such and such a prescribed shape and size, and no more. But when we compare the



finished products of the two systems, the sweet reasonableness of the Eastern method becomes apparent. In no other particular do our home gardens suffer so much by contrast as in the arrangement of rocks. Ours are clumsy, hideously artificial, futile, altogether acts of supererogation itself, compared with theirs. In a very few points we can teach the Japanese something in gardening—but not in this. I think (apologies for the implied pun) rocks are the very strongest features of their gardens.

Our methods in this line, although perhaps governed by that inscrutable thing called the law of chance, which we are assured is a deep but definite science, give, instead of the unstudied and casual effect desired, only one of laboured ignorance and haphazard ugliness. Their ways, governed by rules which are based on careful and exact observation of Nature herself, give an effect at once beautiful and, as it were, inevitable. We feel as if only a happy accident has made their stony beds for water, that by good luck they have stumbled on their felicitous combinations of trees and shrubs; and, with a self-accusing excuse, we pretend to believe that since Nature has really made the garden for them, anyone, even we ourselves, must have had the sense to leave it so!

The high monetary as well as æsthetic value with which Japanese gardens are adorned would probably amaze the average foreigner

beyond words. Their designers will bring great boulders from almost incredible distances (not, however, from foreign countries, as a rule, for that would not be in line with their artistic notions as to the fitness of things), and will pay large sums for them. So extravagant were the prices paid for beautiful and appropriate stones in the Tempo Period (1830 to 1844), that an Imperial Edict had to be issued to curb the liberality of rock fanciers, and a limit was placed on the sum that might be paid for one stone.

Great ingenuity is sometimes shown in transporting the big boulders which are considered so necessary to any garden in the attempt to portray mountain scenery or that of a rocky river bed. These great blocks are, with the most delicate precision (for the Japanese are wonderful stone masons), split apart into portable pieces, each of which is marked and arranged, so that it may, like a Japanese puzzle, be put together again. On arrival at the scene of its new home, it is stuck together without any break being left to show, with the universal cement of the Far East, *chunam*—clay mixed with lime.

But to return to the stones, and their quaint but intelligent method and rules for employment, I feel that I cannot do better than quote from Mr. Conder's illuminating book. For although my Japanese friends, who were always almost

gratefully glad to help me to information on a subject at the same time so near to their hearts and so deeply interesting to me, have given me almost the same facts and many of the same names, I could not begin to present the rules as clearly as he does, or to be sure that, in my inability to read the Japanese characters, I could even approach it in the same spirit.

The five radical shapes for garden stones are given as follows :—

“ A tall vertical stone, bulging out towards the middle and finishing conically at the top, called the *Taido-seki*,—the nearest intelligible translation of which is ‘Statue Stone,’—on account of its supposed resemblance in form to that of the human body.

“ A shorter vertical stone, rounded slightly at the base, finishing in an irregular blunted cone, and resembling the bud of a Magnolia flower, the name applied to which is *Reijo-seki*, which may be rendered as ‘Low Vertical Stone.’

“ A low broad stone of irregular shape and horizontal character, with a flat top, rather higher than the ordinary stepping-stone, and called the *Shintai-seki*, or ‘Flat Stone.’

“ Another stone of medium height, with a broad flat top, bent over to one side in an arched manner: this is called the *Shigio-seki*, here freely translated as ‘Arching Stone.’

“ The fifth is a long curved and bent boulder of horizontal character, rising higher at one end than at the other, and somewhat resembling the trunk of a recumbent animal; it is called the *Kikiaku-seki*, or ‘Recumbent-ox Stone.’

“ Of the above five shapes, the Statue Stone, the Low Vertical Stone, and the Arching Stone are vertical in character, or what henceforth will be termed ‘Standing Stones,’ and the Flat Stone and Recumbent-ox Stone are of horizontal character, or ‘Reclining Stones.’ They are variously arranged in combinations of two, three, and five to form groups in the different parts of gardens, assisted by trees, shrubs, grasses, water-basins, and other ornamental objects. It is not to be supposed that such shapes are by any means exact; but natural rocks are chosen which approach as nearly as possible to the character indicated.”

These form the basis of the garden’s arrangement, and are almost invariably placed so that the upright stones serve as a foil for the recumbent ones. I may add that the artistic principle of triangles in composition—the eye being carried from the plane of the two sides to the apex—is practically never forgotten in any form of Japanese art, and reigns subtly and unobtrusively, but supremely, in their rock arrangements. Their gardens always ‘compose.’ Even a person who is not an artist will sit down at the ‘best

viewing point' in any Japanese landscape; he will 'find a picture,' and one ruled by this simple but excellent law of the triangle of beauty.

The highest parts of a garden are usually made to represent the hills or mountains of the particular scene which has been chosen to be represented. The stones which may be employed to assist in this scheme—perhaps as hills themselves of lesser height, or as the débris on the sides—have their names and functions also laid down by the laws of classical precedent. The main ones used Mr. Conder gives as follows :—

“ MOUNTAIN-SUMMIT STONE (*Sancho-seki*).—Placed on or near the summit of a hill.

“ MOUNTAIN-BASE STONE (*Reikiaku-seki*).—Situated near the base of a hill.

“ MOUNTAIN-SIDE STONE (*Sanyo-seki*) and MOUNTAIN-PATH STONE (*Hioin-seki*).—Both arranged on the slope of a hill.

“ PROPITIOUS-CLOUD STONE (*Keiun-seki*).—Placed upon a hill-top.

“ MIST-ENVELOPED STONE (*Muin-seki*), CLEAR-MOON STONE (*Seigetsu-seki*), MOON-SHADOW STONE (*Getsu-in-seki*), and CAVE STONE (*Teito-seki* or *Taido-seki*).—All occupying different positions on the sides of hills, the 'Cave Stone' being always near the 'Kwannon Stone.'

“ KWANNON STONE (*Kwannon-seki*) is the name given to a stone symbolical of Kwannon,









A ROCK LANDSCAPE IN THE  
WATERCOLOR MUSEUM



a deity worshipped on mountain heights, and often represented as seated in a cave; this is also placed on the side of a hill. (See picture on page opposite.)

“MOSS-GROWN STONE (*Seitai-seki*).—Near the base of a hill, but only employed when water is represented beneath. Of the above names, the first five refer to position, and are self-explanatory; the remainder mostly allude to certain effects in mountain scenery which the stones are supposed to typify.”

The valley stones have also their list, nearly as important. As a recital of their names and qualities explains more than a ream of writing would, I again quote:—

“STONES OF THE TWO GODS (*Nijin-seki* or *Ni-O-seki*).—A pair of similar ‘Standing Stones’ intended to represent the guardian deities of the site, and arranged in the flat portion of a garden, near the entrance, just as two statues of Buddhist Devas are placed in the entrance gates of temples. Formerly the ceremony of erecting these stones in position constituted a sort of dedication of the garden. They were washed perfectly clean, and rice and wine were placed before them.

“STONES OF THE THREE GODS (*Sanjin-seki*).—Three vertical rocks sometimes used in combination instead of the above.

“STONE OF WORSHIP (*Reihai-seki* or *Hai-seki*).—Generally placed near a sacred stone, such as the ‘Stone of the Two Deities,’ and at some point in the front of a garden, to form a station from which the best view may be obtained. It is a broad, flat stone, upon which one stands in a posture of veneration.

“WAITING STONE (*Hikae-seki*).—The name given to a ‘Standing Stone,’ more or less conical in shape, placed in the foreground of a garden.

“VIEW-RECEIVING STONE (*Shozo-seki*).—The meaning of which term is not quite clear. It probably indicates a point from which the finest prospect of the garden can be had.

“VIEW-COMPLETING STONE (*Taito-seki*).—Probably referring to the importance of this stone in the distant view.

“DISTANCING ROCK (*Mikoshi-Iwa*).—A rock partly hidden behind a hill, or placed in some shady part of the background, and intended to increase the idea of distance in a garden.

“PEEPING STONE (*Nozoki-ishi*).—A stone screened partially from view by shrubs and trees.

“WINE-CUP STONE (*Sakazuki-ishi*).—So named from its supposed resemblance in shape to a Japanese wine-cup.

“WAYSIDE STONE (*Dokio-seki*).—Situated on the side of a real or imaginary pathway, and suitable for resting upon.

“PASSING-ON STONE (*Koro-seki*).—Placed at

the side of a walk, like a milestone ; it should be a vertical stone, unsuitable as a seat, and contrasting in character with the ' Wayside Stone.' "

There are also the religious stones, as well as those—long lists of each—for water gardens, stones of lake and river, cascade stones, and stones also for tea-gardens. In this chapter there have been enumerated only those stones that are likely to occur in any garden. Strictly speaking, the various water stones should be given here, for that reason ; for seldom does a Japanese garden lack water, or the appearance of water, in its scenery. I feel, however, that it will make for clearness if they are spoken of in later chapters.

This now brings us to the stones that, in this moist land, seem perhaps the most important to the foreigner, namely, stepping-stones. But these stepping-stones, it must be remembered, are not for crossing a stream, nor even for getting through wet grass (for turf is hardly ever used), but they form, in little islands, as it were, the garden paths. The ground having been cleared of every blade of grass, and of weeds, is pounded down firmly and left in that way, or else covered with fine sand or gravel, or perhaps little hard round stones. Nevertheless, with the almost constant rain one could not wander about the garden much without these convenient slabs of stone



to step upon, for the ground when wet becomes very greasy and slippery, and the sand and gravel are never supposed to be trodden on, as they are also part of the design, and are strewn down in some sort of a pattern. As for the hard round pebbles, no one would want to step on them, except a Japanese or a foreigner wearing clogs, as they hurt one's feet. But besides their usefulness in wet weather, their shape and manner of laying are a great addition to the garden. They carry the eye, as well as the feet, to the point of vantage best for viewing the whole scene, or to the central place of interest. The reader will notice, from Mr. Tyndale's pictures, that his foregrounds are almost invariably made more interesting by the introduction of this very characteristic feature. Stepping-stones carry the eye to the central point of the picture.

That to the Japanese mind these stepping-stones are not without their poetic suggestion may be inferred by the ideas and images their names imply. The favourite way of laying them, in fours and threes or in twos and threes, in an irregular zigzag, is called 'Wild-goose Flight,' or 'Seagull Style.' They are also called 'Flying Stones,' and 'Wild-duck Winging Stones.' Again, where the sand has been combed to represent the waves of the sea, these stones are called *Shiki Shima*, or 'Scattered Islands,' and even the most casual tourist

who has been through the Inland Sea will appreciate the association. This allusion occurs not infrequently in poetry :

“My garden’s waves of white sand break  
In lines upon its beach ;  
But stony isles sure passage make,  
Though wind and storm their safety shake,  
In wild-gull’s flights my way I take,  
Secure my haven reach.”

But, again, a real science governs the placing of these slabs. If the distances are planned for the scale of their own people’s size, and not for our large feet and longer stride, it only proves their careful accuracy. Steps are shorter where legs are shorter too, and there is no doubt that these sturdy little people have dwarfed theirs by incessant *suari*-ing—their hereditary custom of sitting on their feet instead of on chairs. The length of pace is also restricted by the bind of the kimono ; and even when this is tied back, as it so often is in the case of the men, or tucked up, as in the case of working-women, who have no false modesty about their legs, the habit of taking short steps has been formed irrevocably.

Of course if these stones were all of a size and shape, and were laid down according to *our* mathematics, in the shortest line between two objects, the effect would be hideous, but the longest way round is usually the fittest way home for them, as it generally provides

a view, or a surprise of some pleasant sort, somewhere along the route; therefore they place this path of stones as Nature herself would, never straight, but with the winds and curves and twists a river might take. Some stones are large and some are small, but all are of a height, so as to avoid any unevenness of tread which might cause feet to stumble; but perhaps you can take two steps, or even three or four, on a big flat stone, and then, for the next two or three smaller stones, only one step on each. They are not put close together, however, and never are cemented to make a regular pavement, but enough space is left between to enable the favourite Japanese pastime of cleaning to be fully indulged in. All this apparent irregularity, although fully worked out beforehand, gives these stepping-stones the most delightful air of having been thrown down a few minutes before you came, so that you need not wet your feet when you go out to look at the Irises slowly unfurling their delicate flags, or to watch the goldfish in the little pond, as the children throw them food. It is the perennially interesting thing about a Japanese garden that it seems as if, like Topsy, it had 'just grewed.'

But, however casual they may appear, these stones invariably serve a purpose, and that purpose is usually shown in the nomenclature. The 'Step-dividing Stones' at the branching

point of a path; the 'Shoe-removing Stone' and the 'Sword-hanging Stone' at the house entrance; the 'Worshipping Stone,' from which the best and most worshipful view is to be obtained; the 'Lantern-lighting Stone'; the 'Water-falling Stone' beside the water-basin—all explain themselves.

In front of the veranda there is usually an extra big slab, to allow, as I suppose, of several opinions regarding the weather before venturing out to view the latest garden curiosity; and this stone Mr. Tyndale—and I too, in my humbler way—found most useful as a base from which to paint, for it practically always commands a choice view, and yet is sufficiently close to shelter to save oneself and one's drawing, even at the last moment, from a sudden downpour.

Sometimes two long strips of stone border a flower-bed or overlapping well, of course being so placed for the convenience of flower-gazers. They are rather like the bits of cardboard on which these poetic people write verses, to hang like Orlando's in the trees, and so are called 'Label Stones.' Others, longer and not so wide in proportion, are designated 'Obi Stones'—'obi' being, of course, the indispensable sash of the whole nation.

This is but a meagre list of the many stones used in a Japanese garden, for wherever the 'art of utility,' if I may so call it, demands

a stone, there is one placed, never without due thought and a just weighing of need and effect, of classic precedent and of present necessity; and, these permitting, an honourable name is given, and it becomes a respected member of the family stones.

As a final word, I may say that I believe the Japanese ascribe more humanity to their stones than they do to their flowers or trees, or even—with the exception of the fox and badger—to their animals. Perhaps it is because of rock their gods are carven, on rock their eulogies to great men are inscribed, of rock their gravestones are made,—which every year are tended and honoured as if, for a day, the dead lived again,—that the personality of the stones becomes a more reasonable suggestion.

But even if, in their names, they did not seem to be endowed with character and personality, their very position and situation in the garden takes them out of the class of dead, inanimate things, gives to them the responsibility of definite duties, and makes them, at the very least, into living rocks.



## CHAPTER V

### GARDEN ACCESSORIES (LANTERNS AND PAGODAS)

“The garden ways are dark, the stars are gone  
From the dim sky, the lantern gleams alone  
Beside the lake, where its dark form reveals  
The fire-fly's spirit prison'd in the stone.”

PERHAPS the most characteristically Japanese things in a Japanese garden are the lanterns. If they, and the little pagodas which so much resemble them in effect, were omitted, as well as the small shrines, the charming miniature bridges, and perhaps the most ornamental of the water-basins and well-covers, one who did not know their gardens intimately might easily be deceived into believing them pretty bits of natural scenery. Yet these ornaments, delightful in design, quaint and attractive as they may be, are but accessories after the fact of the garden's *raison d'être*. While one hardly ever sees a garden, even of the poorest, which does not boast a lantern of some sort, be it only a little wooden one, resembling a house for birds, every other item which I have named can be dispensed with, and the place



would still remain typical of the national mind and hands which produced it.

It is a great satisfaction for one who loves the Japanese to note that stone lanterns were not, as everything else in the artistic line appears to have been, introduced into Japan from China. They seem to have been a veritable product of the natural genius of the people, and are employed everywhere. I have never seen them in a Chinese garden, and, so far as I know, they are never used in them.

The first lantern of this sort appears to have been set up in the fourth century A.D. by a certain Prince Iruhiko, the son of the Emperor Sinko, beside a lonely lake in a spot infested with robbers. Whether this little glimmering light illumining the dark served to frighten the bad men away or helped the samurai to see to kill them off is not stated, but, at any rate, after awhile it was taken to the Tachibana Temple at Yamato, and set up in the grounds there.

This beginning was possibly what caused lanterns to become such popular adornments to temples, Shinto as well as Buddhist, where, lining the avenues of approach, they stand in their hundreds, and even in their thousands, like sentinels with their torches held aloft.

Lanterns may be roughly separated into two types: those with legs and those without, although it would perhaps be more accurate to say those which are set up off the earth by







CHERRY BLOSSOM AND STONE LANTERN  
UENO TADY



means of legs, and those of a single stem rising from a plinth or flat base resting upon the ground. The latter sort, much like a 'Standard' lamp in appearance, may be called the senior variety. They are used in gardens or temple grounds where a dignified effect is sought, and usually carry on the architectural features of the buildings they are near. They are generally made of stone, and the pedestal as well as the outside of the fire-box and the top may be carved with Buddhist emblems or the crests of daimios. They are handsome and stately, but lack, maybe, a little of the quaint charm of the more informal kind with legs and greater individuality.

However much foundation for it there is in fact, it would appear that religious sentiment is greatly concerned in the employment of the 'Standard' types of lanterns. They were a favourite form of votive offering, or propitiatory gift to the temple god, from the great daimios and noblemen, and their use in private gardens seems to have a little of the religious element as well as of the æsthetic still lingering about it; nor is it at all an uncommon sight to find their tiny glimmering lights, shining out like larger glow-worms or fire-flies, in small home gardens at the time of one of their temple festivals, while they remain dark for a private celebration or gathering.

Temple lanterns are made of bronze as well as of stone, but the former are put inside the



sacred edifice itself, or at least in the courtyard, while those of stone are kept for the grounds. These last are used in any places where stones or rocks might be found, and where they would fit in with their natural surroundings. They are nearly always of the 'Standard' type.

There are iron lanterns too, although these are usually hung up, not standing ; and porcelain ones, which, from the inharmony of their colouring and composition to their surroundings, are seldom used.

A more lovely effect than that produced by the long lines of stone lanterns at Miyajima would be hard to imagine, with their myriad lights reflected and repeated in the waters of the incoming tide. These lanterns, and those in or about other temples, vary in size from the tiny ones inside the small temples to the huge ones which line the avenues or stand at the doors of the large temples. Some of those at Miyajima, which stand in rows, like troops, fronting the shore, might serve as guardsmen in the lantern army, although most of them would be a good deal more than six feet tall. Then there are giants, in pairs, in various places, that soar as high as eighteen or twenty feet. But as everything in this, as in other directions, is comparative, the height of the lantern is governed by that of the surrounding objects, by the scale of the whole composition. In temple or palace grounds, planned on a big scale, are the great stone or

bronze ones, and there are prescribed shapes, too, for these large lanterns, based on the principle of appropriateness.

For smaller gardens there are shapely things, four or five feet tall, which are much used either alone or in groups composed of an 'Erect' lantern,—that is, one of the 'Standard' type,—a 'Recumbent Stone,' and some shrubs, or an overhanging pine. For little gardens the sizes shrink, as if Alice had lent them some of her mushroom to eat; and in some of these it is as though the mushroom itself had come alive, here before, there after taking, for some are large and some small, but all gracefully patterned to resemble that fungus. These mushroom shapes are generally set up on short legs with their widespreading umbrella tops; they are known as 'Snow-scene' lanterns, because, although most picturesque in summer, and quaintly suited to the diminutive rustic nook in which they are placed, they are still more charming in the winter, with their broad flat tops softly covered with white snow.

This shape is not of the small tribe, however, for, though squat, its top must be broad enough to display its design and form when clothed in its thick winter garment; so it is not for the very modest and small garden, of which there are so many thousands scattered all over the country, but for rather large places where there is a landscape effect. In little spaces, lanterns

made of wood, like thatched houses, are seen, not more than eight or ten inches high, or small rough ones of stone, from one to two feet up from the ground.

While there are only two distinct classes of shape—the ‘Standard’ and the ‘Legged’ ones—so much variety is introduced into these that many appear to belong to totally different orders. And when I stop and think over some I know, I wonder where exactly they should be put. Certainly the ‘Valley’ shape, set up on its curved crane, like a big ‘C’ spring with a lamp-bowl atop, is neither a ‘Standard’ nor a ‘Legged’ lantern. Then there is the one Mr. Tyndale shows in the Ashinoyu garden (facing page 156), set on a granite ring, with a snow-scene top. Where ought that to go? If we say that the two classes are those with legs and those without, we gain nothing in our argument, for a ring is not a leg, nor is a crane—unless a crane might be said to be one crooked leg!

For temple gardens the ‘Standard’<sup>1</sup> is the favoured kind, more especially that known as the ‘Kasuga’ shape. This was named after a Shinto god whose main temple is at Nara, but he has serious rivals. The ‘Shiratayu’ design (named after a class of Shinto officials) is only slightly different in the decorations: the main lines are the same. A dozen more might be named of these architecturally severe and classic

<sup>1</sup> As in the picture facing page 60.

shapes which are suitable for placing near buildings, but many modifications, as well as the regular temple variety, are to be seen in private grounds.

The other distinct type differs radically from the Standard in that it is short and very broad-topped, and has three—sometimes four—feet (they can hardly be called legs, since they are so short). This is the mushroom design before referred to, and is much admired in the central parts of Japan, where snow in winter reveals its beauty. It is employed, therefore, in the more rural parts of the garden, with rocks and shrubs about, and nearly always with a Pine tree drooping over it, so that in winter the 'flowers of the snow' adorn them together. Personally, at all times of the year I find these lanterns enchanting, and far better suited to the intimacy of a small garden than the tall and impressive ones can ever be.

Then there are other sorts, hardly more than two stones set one on top of a second, with the inside of the upper one roughly chipped out for holding its little light. These might almost as well be placed in the list of stones. Dozens of them are to be seen in the weird desolation of Oji Goku, or Owaji Dani, near Miyanoshta, and it is as if the Brocken Top scene from *Faust* had been transferred to the Bad Lands of Japan, and the elves and gnomes were there, crouching dwarfed figures in stone.

It is said of the Japanese that they do not personify stones, animals, and flowers, but they would be a far less imaginative people than undoubtedly they are if they did not attribute malignant life to this wild place, with its bubbling water, and seething sulphur, and vapour coming up wherever one breaks the crust with foot or stick an inch away from the none too safe path. Whether these rude little lanterns were erected from the national passion for placing them where they may appropriately add to the picturesqueness of the scene; or whether they were to propitiate the wild demon of that valley of desolation and terror, or to act informally as proper lights to the many little shrines there; or whether, perhaps, they were set up by grateful travellers in thanks for a safe passage through that gorge to Hakone or Miyanoshita, and to light others who might follow them, I do not know. The same sort of little rough stone lanterns I have often seen placed in rugged mountain passes, and also in peasants' gardens, and close to modest wayside shrines. They are never used where the surroundings are cultivated, or where any high degree of finish is to be found in the gardening.

Hanging lanterns are frequently seen in corners of verandas of private houses, and also in tea-houses. They are usually globular, square, or octagonal in shape, of hand-wrought bronze



or iron filigree work, in semi-conventional flower designs. Sometimes glowing silk, of the brilliant living colours known only in Japan, is put inside as a lining to the open-work bronze. They struck me as being very well suited for hall or vestibule hanging lamps; but I found, when trying to adapt them to the high rooms in the Hong-Kong houses, that they did not furnish enough light. They would be decorative in low-ceiled rooms more like those of Japanese houses, however, where their beauty of detail would be brought nearer to the eye.

But whether lanterns are architecturally fine, or left in the rough, whether they are of stone or of wood, of bronze or of iron, they should bear the marks of age. And it is truly wonderful how quickly young ones can be made to appear venerable in this moist and artistic country. All sorts of methods, it is true, are resorted to in order to age them. The stone ones are smeared with bird-lime, or the slime of snails, which attracts and encourages a pretty white lichen, and turns them from babes into old men with bleached heads in only a few months' time. If the owners are in a still greater hurry to get the effect, they gum on mosses and lichens. If there is no haste, or if the stone has already put on its pretty green and gold velvet cap, it is carefully watered every day. It is droll to see this watering done, and to note with what



care the nurse examines the child's head to see how the hair is coming on !

All this to make old lamps of new ! and yet with mine own eyes have I seen ardent men and boys,—perhaps twenty of them,—under the direction of their head priest, scrub, with sand and soap and water, the stone torii<sup>1</sup> and its two great guardian stone lanterns, just before the August matsuri<sup>2</sup> at Hakone. It was a cruel blow to an artist friend, as well as to me, for we had begun a sketch of the beautiful trio, and had never done admiring the lovely silvery lichens that adorned them. But one swallow does not make a summer, and I will not believe that such a crime is often perpetrated in this age-venerating and art-loving land.<sup>3</sup>

Although lanterns are primarily set up to give light, I should be wronging the reader who does not know Japan if I did not confess honestly the severe disappointment I suffered in them when I first went there—in that they are very seldom seen lighted. I have lived in close proximity to a lantern for months, in a pretty garden I know of, and while it invariably fitted in with its surroundings, in the spring giving the necessary relief to the flame-coloured Azaleas abloom at its foot, in the summer swayed over by splendid heads of

<sup>1</sup> A kind of archway marking the approach to a shinto temple.

<sup>2</sup> A religious festival.

<sup>3</sup> I am told the same thing occurs yearly at Nikko ; but it is so wet there that the moss renews itself in a few weeks' time.

the *Lilium auratum* and Tiger Lilies, and in the autumn delicately displaying the tiny carmine stars of the Maple leaves that nestled near it, yet only once did I see its little candle box alight, and that was for the Feast of Souls, in August.

But they have a reason for being, and so the most is made of them. What the sundial was to old English and Colonial American gardens, that the stone lantern is to its Japanese prototype. Can it be transplanted? Well, I have one in Hong-Kong which pretends to light the path leading up to the house. Because of the intolerable burning of our winter suns, the drying, searing qualities of our winter winds, and the monstrous ravages of our summer typhoons, no watering can restore the moss with which it was adorned in the little garden at Shimonoseki, whence it was torn. It has no delicate Plum or Cherry branches to caress it; no protecting Pine tree (as yet) to lean over and shield it; no 'Recumbent Stone' beside its austere straightness, to bring to it lines of beauty; in fact, it is quite out of its picture. And yet every man and woman, white or brown or yellow, who goes near it stops to examine and to admire it. And so, if it is still a pleasant thing to see here, where climate, tropical sun, scenery are all against it, what will it not be when it goes into a quiet nook in an English garden, where skies are soft and wet, as in Japan, and where its old friends, the Japanese

Lilies and Maples, have also found a new home ? <sup>1</sup>

Pagodas, although a direct importation from China,—or, rather, one by way of Korea,—have much the same effect in a garden as have stone lanterns. It may be owing to my bias for things Japanese, as contrasted with Chinese, or it may be (and I think it is) because lanterns have their sphere of usefulness and pagodas have not, that I cannot share the Japanese enthusiasm for them. Every other thing to be found in a Japanese garden has its use—if pure ornament can be considered of economic value ; but pagodas have nothing to recommend them but their quaintness. Of course, where the larger originals appear in a scene which is being reproduced in miniature, they are, perhaps, necessary according to the Japanese ideas, but I confess to rather a prejudice against them. They may be all very well for Dora's dog, Jip, to lie in, or to exhibit the piety and riches of some big man in China ; but they look foolish and futile even in that land, and much more so in Japan, where they are a deliberate imitation.

However, this is not the view taken by the Japanese themselves, so I will try to find what extenuating circumstances I can for them, according to my judgment.

<sup>1</sup> I regret to say that since writing this a typhoon wrenched this stone lantern from the cement in which it was imbedded and dashed it into a thousand pieces down the stone steps which it had lighted.

In their full-sized state, both in China and Japan, one can at least say that when their stairways and floors are not rotten, or porous from the depredations of white ants, you can climb to the upper storey, whence you are nearly always sure of a fine view. But in these miniature pagodas no climbing would be possible; you could not even sit on the top to look at the view because of the ball or the spike.

These little buildings are usually of stone, with from three to nine tiers of roofs. Sometimes they are only a series of projecting eaves, but more often there is at least the pretence of a storey in between. The square, hexagonal, or octagonal cap which crowns the structure is much like the top part of the 'Kasuga'-shaped lantern, and, like the lantern, they are generally supported by a plinth rising from the solid ground. Sometimes, however, they are set up on three or more legs, like mushroom-shaped lanterns, and then they look perfectly ridiculous. They are called *Koraito*, or 'Korean Towers,' and are supposed to have some religious significance, though what it is I don't believe the people know themselves. Their large prototypes in the temple grounds at Nikko, at Miyajima, and at Kyoto seem to have no particular use assigned to them. In China devout Buddhists build them to show their faith—or their wealth.

There is an infinite number of variations of pattern, some purely Chinese, others inclining

more to the Korean, and again others very suggestive of the horrid monuments of Siam, called 'Wats.' I have seen them with bells at the corners which made a light tinkling when the wind shook them, and if one did not see them the fairy chiming was rather charming.

These little pagodas are not always of stone, just as the big ones are not invariably of wood. Sometimes 'Arbor Vitæ' trees are clipped into shape, and Mr. Tyndale, in his picture of a Buddhist temple and of a garden at Kofu (facing page 126), shows how charming these are, set in the midst of other clipped trees, beside a tiny stream. But this only goes to prove that what the Japanese adapt from the Chinese, Koreans—or from any other nations for that matter—for use in their gardens, they improve and give some of their own individuality and charm.









TEMPLE FENCE AND GATE, HIGASHI OTANI  
1890



## CHAPTER VI

### GARDEN FENCES AND HEDGES

“Over the garden fence my Plum tree blooms,  
Inviting in the weary passers-by;  
I may not close the gates now, if I would:  
The world may love my flowers as well as I.”

**T**HIS poem is not only a pleasant fancy, but a literal fact in Japan, where the owner of a garden which boasts a flowering tree does not selfishly shut it out with a high fence and well-locked gates, limiting the joy of his possession to himself and his intimates. No, he has the fence, and one high enough for privacy, although not too high for air and light, and he has the gates; but when the bloom is on the bough the passer-by may enter and enjoy and worship, just as he might, in a Roman Catholic country, enter a church, pray, and pass on again. Nor do these people take an unfair advantage of the privilege, for I firmly believe that, if there were tramps and rogues in Japan (which there are not), they would be dowered with a moral as well as an æsthetic sense, and that not even the most hardened of them would steal so much as a flower.

The Japanese, in their fences, garden walls, and hedges, have arrived at a happy medium between the methods employed in America and England. The British idea of a private possession, into which no man may even look without an invitation, is perhaps a little selfish. The American notion that a man's lawn and front garden should be as much for the adornment of the street on which he lives as for his own use and pleasure is, although so altruistic, to my way of thinking a mistaken one, for it is only in its privacy that one can enjoy a garden or grass and trees. But the Japanese combine the merits of both systems. The fence, or wall, or hedge, as the case may be, is in itself so attractive that one need hardly turn to the blooming trees that overhang it; to the branch of Bamboo, or flowering Pomegranate, or Cherry, half caught through its moon-shaped opening, or peeping over the corner; to the Pine tree that guards its gates, to lend it interest and grace, and decorate the street on which it faces. But when, added to this, is the fact that the flower-loving stranger may enter unasked,—I do not say he would, but he might, and he would be treated with courtesy, and as if by his appreciation he conferred a favour on his willy-nilly host,—it would appear as though the real millennium of garden-owning had arrived.

In towns or crowded districts, very high



bamboo fences are to be seen, sometimes reaching up fifteen or even twenty feet. This, for the owner of the little garden, is a veritable house wall, and is only employed to ensure great privacy; so good taste dictates (as well as kindness towards the people who would have to pass, or to look at it from the other side) that this dull, blank surface should be broken and beautified by working the bamboo in patterns and by the introduction of round or square openings, like little latticed windows, part of the way up. When these are left open, as is occasionally done, a flowering tree, a Bamboo, or perhaps a Pine of just the right shape, is trained to act as the picture behind the frame, or maybe to thrust a graceful arm through, as if to wave its hand to those beyond the pale. More often, however, the opening is filled in, wholly or in part, with a delicately patterned fretwork of bamboo. This gives an almost Indian look to the spot, although no buildings in Japan have the air of permanent stability that those in India have. Even when these lunettes are elaborated with open-work traceries in this way, behind them still may be seen, through the little openings, the well-trained trees of the garden inside. These are more common in Kyoto and the central part of Japan than they are farther North, in Tokio and Yokohama, but it is only in crowded districts that they are to be seen even there.



But the ideal Japanese garden fence is not nearly so high as this, six feet being considered a good height. It may be made of wood, of bamboo (for the two are not classed together by the Japanese, who fully appreciate that the latter is a grass), or of plaster set in wood. Also stone walls are sometimes seen, although these are fairly modern. I know some nice ones in the neighbourhood of Nagasaki, with a hedge above them. Their walls are invariably a delight, for in this handicraft, as in others, their discerning eyes and obedient and nimble hands excel. Unless it be because of their many earthquakes, I do not know why stone is so little used for building in their country, for they are past masters in its employment for retaining walls of roads, for the dykes of their mad torrents of rivers and mountain streams, for foundations, and for the construction of bridges. Besides this, Japan is almost all rock and boulder, and no people ever prized the beauty of stones more. Of course it is equally true that they are master craftsmen in the arts of wood working, carving, fine carpentering work, and cabinet-making, and also in the manipulation of bamboo. Again, it can be urged that no country in the world has a greater variety of forest trees whose wood is suitable for working, and nowhere are there so many bamboos available for that work. So if they, in the embarrassment of their riches, choose to

work wood instead of stone for their houses, temples, and fences, they do it so beautifully that we cannot complain.

Walls made of strong and heavy wood, such as is used in the construction of temples, are employed rather more often than stone for surrounding important parks and gardens whose owners are people of distinction. The timber is generally used as a framework, and the walls are filled in with tiles and clay, and are stoutly plastered. The top has a graceful roof of handsome tiles, and, with the great covered gateways with ornamental roofs, they are very suggestive of Chinese pleasure palace walls, from which they were doubtless copied. Of this sort many are to be seen in Tokio and Kyoto, in and around palace and temple grounds.

Others, more modest, but of the same general construction, are built for places less grand and also less important, and, descending in scale, we finally see the same sort of wall, lower, not roofed even with shingles, but simply encased in slabs of wood at the top, around very humble places in central Japan. Miyajima has many, the walls washed white or a warm delicious yellow, which, somehow, always suggested Italy. One very un-Japanese note was, perhaps, accountable for this—the wood-work was painted, and instead of the soft silvery greys and warm purple-browns of old, time-beautified wood, a neat coat of reddish

brown colour had been applied. I confess I liked it, for there, with its warm Italian colouring in sky and sea and merry brown-faced children, it all seemed to harmonize. In other parts of Japan solid wooden fences are often used, and slabbed ones, or heavy rustic ones of unhewn trees, but seldom have I seen paint on any others.

Perhaps it is wrong of me to perpetuate its memory by writing of it, but I know of two or three fences in Hakone Machi and Moto Hakone which have been painted by their owners in what they fondly believe to be 'foreign style.'

One of my friends had taken a house for the summer at the former place, which had possessed, during the three previous seasons of her occupancy, a beautiful old fence, stained by the fingers of time the most lovely silver grey, with mauve shadows and bronzy markings. What was her horror, on returning last year, to find it changed by that awful alchemy of progress, the paint-pot, into a terror in bright blue! It swore audibly and viciously at all around, the particular victim of its rage being a great clump of crimson (I dare not describe them in their true colour, as magenta) phlox, with which it had been sweetly in love the year before. The poor garden, once so perfect in its own stately way, with clipped trees and old dwarfed shrubs, seemed suddenly to have shrunk together, and

put its poor hands before its face to exclude the dreadful sight of the indignity that had been offered it. My horrified friend, artistic to the marrow, was speechless with grief and rage; but the 'O Kama San,' proud and pleased (although I know, from the way she arranged flowers, that she must have secretly hated it), displayed it to every 'Igen San' who passed, as a proof of her breadth of mind and progress.

I remember another painted fence, in the little fishing village where Commodore Perry first landed, Kurihama; but that was not so bad. Some sailor, perhaps from one of the foreign ships docked at Uraga, had given the pot of paint—yellow ochre, it was. Luckily there had not been enough of it to paint properly the tall fence of palings, and the artist had therefore thinned it down with oil or turpentine, or something of the sort, so that, except in places, due to inexperience in mixing, it was little more than a stain. Its warm, golden, wood colour was rather charming, and the village folk loved it as a natural curiosity which they hardly pretended to understand.

But let us return to fences in general, and leave particular ones and their styles of decoration until a little later. Walls of mud and tiles, of plaster and of wood, are of very ancient usage, but open work and ornamental fences appear to date only from about the Kamakura Period, while Mr. Conder tells us that "When



the 'Tea Ceremonies' came into vogue, in the time of the Ashikaga Shoguns, there are said to have been twenty-five different kinds invented." But with the many slight differences there are, and the many possible combinations, one can bring the number up to a figure enormously greater. Of these wooden fences, except in the rare case of those very highly decorated ones, *ornés de dragons bleus et de bizarres fleurs*, for temple grounds, the wood is always left unpainted. In a land which can boast a hundred and eighty-six varieties of forest trees alone, there is naturally a wonderful choice of material. While those with the most beautiful grain, and best marked, are certainly not used for fences, one who pauses to examine them wonders if they can be less than the finest, so satin-smooth the highly finished ones are, so strikingly marked is the wood of the middle grade of fence and finish, so rough and picturesque are those surrounding the more rural style of garden (for it is hardly necessary to say that these people's railings are made to conform in style, size, finish, and character to the gardens they surround). Of course it is unnecessary to add that they also look old, and rather worn. The slabs of some of the fences are like grey 'watered' silk, and others again like bands of striped ribbon, fair and smooth. The delicate shading, purple, green, and bronze, that water-stained wood acquires, is greatly prized, so old boats

are frequently taken apart to furnish forth an artistic fence. I have seen the finely coloured piles of an ancient pier taken up to make supports for such a fence, and to adorn each side of the gateway. At Karuizawa (which is a place so overrun with foreign missionaries that there is not, one would think, much chance left for native taste to show itself) an old and lovely fence (or so it seems) around one of the new and ugly hotels which shows yet another way of exhibiting the grain of the wood. It appears in high relief. At first I thought that, in its nearness to Asama Yama (which is the most active volcano I have ever had the luck to see), the wind, blowing lava-dust and cinders about, had worn away the soft part of the wood, leaving, by one of those happy accidents which one is always imagining with respect to Japanese gardens, the hard, fibrous grain exposed; but, on further looking into the matter, I found that it was purposely, and even laboriously done by hand, the newly cut posts having been rubbed and rubbed and rubbed with the powdered pumice-stone that takes the place of sand and gravel in the neighbourhood of the fiery mountain. The process is employed in other places, using ordinary sand instead of the pumice-stone. The effect, to us, is not particularly pretty, more especially after the remark of an observer when you are admiring it that it suggests an anatomist's model of a human leg



or arm, made to indicate the positions of the sinews and muscles, the veins and the arteries.

It is hardly necessary to say that the help of man's hand, as well as of the rain and weather, is invoked for the decoration of fences,—not in painting, but in giving the appearance of age. Silvery lichens, velvety moss, green and orange ; the warm greys won from the sun, the cold greys brought by the rain, assist in adorning the wood ; but while the climate does a great deal, and does it quickly, intelligent aid helps on the good work. Earth is rubbed into the grain of the wood and is carefully damped, and moss is the recompense of this generous charity. Sometimes little ferns grow in the cracks, due, I am sure, to a deliberate invitation on the part of the fence owners.

A favourite method of decorating some wooden fences is to hold a lighted torch under the wood in places, so that it is charred,—an original and ugly form of ' poker work ' ; it is, however, popular in fishing villages more particularly, as the charring is said to preserve the wood. The ' Rustic Fence ' is often found, but it is not the meaningless, mongrel sort of thing that it is with us. Our rustic palings never seem to have any connexion with real outdoor life. But those in Japan are of ingeniously pretty shapes, like country girls, caught, but not frightened out of their native grace, and









performing with simple charm the work required of them.

When we come to bamboo fences, there is such a wonderful variety that one hardly knows where to begin to describe. First of all, it should be said that here, as always, the style and degree of finish must depend upon that of the garden which the fence is to surround. There are three grades of workmanship—the rough, which is often the prettiest, the medium, and the highly wrought.

Of the first degree, bamboos sliced in half, or in quarters, and tied on to upright supports of whole tubes of the same material, would give one a fair idea, while a delicately woven and plaited paling of basket-work panels might represent the more elaborate kinds. Between these run all sorts of grades and shades of difference.

The methods of tying the bamboos, the material used, and the design, if I may call it so, of the knots, immensely increase the variety. Then there are open as well as closed bamboo fences, high and low ones, simple and severe, fanciful and elaborate kinds, and combinations of all these. There are fences with ‘Moon-entering’ openings, others closed below and latticed above, or with round or square windows set in the solid part, that discover adorable twisted Plum branches, with their delicate snowflake blooms set off against the shadow of the garden behind. There are fences which



are bundles of reeds that suggest torches, and fences which have made many a public school boy think of other days; and again more of the same material, but evenly fastened, as if they formed a thin hedge of bare twigs, that are called 'Nightingale' fences.

These last were, to me, more poetic in sentiment than in appearance, for they reminded me of the fences of the poor negroes in the swamps of Arkansas; and although I remember how the mocking-birds sang there when I was a child, I recollect, still more clearly, the savagely barking, half-starved dogs that used to dash out from behind them, and the gibbering old 'witch woman' who would scream at us over the fence of switches. But the Japanese are gentler than those untamed Africans who had been brought to die of ague in our Southern swamps, and their birds are more serene and happy beings too. The nightingale—the bird-lover of the Plum—may serenade his mistress from these bare twigs, happily fancying his song will evoke her flowers. The poet says—

"My fence of twigs is desolate with snow,  
And yet the loving nightingale is there.  
He takes the snowflakes for his lady's flowers,  
And pours his soul out in his love and woe."

These twig fences are built also in two and three tiers, but even the higher ones are only

appropriately used around—or as screen fences in—the rougher sorts of gardens.

More than a word should be said, too, of the cords with which parts of bamboo and reed fences are tied, for it is in these little details—as in a dress from a good Paris house—that originality and perfection of finish are displayed. The rope is generally of natural fibre, perhaps of Wistaria, which is so strong that it may be used to hold parts of buildings together; perhaps of the tough little tendrils of vines and creepers, or of the strong grass which the Chinese use so much, but as likely as not it will be of sago palm, or of hemp, dyed black or brown or deep sienna. There are used no ugly glaring and staring yellows and pinks and purples, to insult the eyes of these artistic people; even the cords—I had almost written ‘chords’—must harmonize.

But a most important type of fence is not to be omitted, the ‘Screen,’ or ‘Sleeve Fence.’ In these almost more variety exists than in any other kind, because their object is to conceal, by a beautiful thing, something else that is un-beautiful. They are usually at the edge of the veranda to protect the washer at the water-basin, or perhaps to block out some unsightly but necessary part of the house or grounds, or to give interest, and a sense of there being ‘more beyond,’ to a restricted space. The very name, ‘Sleeve Fence,’ is suggestive of

the graceful drooping sleeve held up to screen off a view, though very often it would be larger than the whole kimono is.

This fence may be rather stiff and architectural in form, to add to the dignity of a stately house, and to carry on its style into the garden; but often it is quite irregular in shape and design, and, I confess it sadly, sometimes 'rococo' to the last degree.

I give a few names of the many varieties of the 'Screen Fence,' and the reader can doubtless construct for himself a picture of the quaintness and charm to which these names are a key. The 'Clothes-horse Fence'—the shape of that delightful and useful article which the traveller will remember to have seen in the sleeping-rooms of country inns, private bath-houses, etc., in Japan; the open spaces between the bars, in this case, are filled in with bamboo work in good designs. The 'Armour' pattern has a diagonal band in the centre, of crossed and tied Wistaria tendrils, which somewhat resembles ancient Japanese chain-mail. The 'Moon-entering Screen Fence' is, in an irregular way, like the repeating type which encloses the garden and bears the same name. It is not, however, so attractive, to my thinking, for the single opening, slightly broken at one side, for a Plum tree's twisted trunk and branches to appear, seems to me too palpable a strain after effect, and gives the pretty little work an air of

sophistication instead of the guileless look it should have. Then there is the 'Bundle of Reeds Screen Fence,' the 'Double' and the 'Triple' stage one, and the 'Nightingale Screen Fence,' which are all allied in style to their namesakes which surround the garden; the 'Leaning Plum Tree,' the 'Round Window,' the 'Looking Through,' and the 'Peeping' kinds, are variations of those with openings. Of the different sorts, with their various modifications and combinations, it would not be hard to make up a list of a hundred kinds.

In between fences and hedges might be placed the open palings of bamboo which serve the double purpose of fence and trellis, and which, with their network of creeper covering, often have the look of hedges. They are delightful, informal-looking affairs, not appropriate for the boundaries of big and imposing gardens, but very charming around the smaller and perhaps more cheerful sorts. Moto Hakone has several, overrun with Morning Glories and the crimson stars of Cyprus Vines. Sometimes one sees them with Wistaria, but this would be the higher kind, not the little ones two or three feet high that are most frequently seen. I have noted them, too, covered with the glowing orange of Bignonia, but that also would soon need a tall trellis to show off the splendours of the blossoms.

I want to call the attention of Americans to

this form of fence. It is not unknown in the United States, though it is not employed nearly so much as it might be. People who do not desire privacy, and who are generous enough to wish the public to enjoy the sight of their smooth and sloping lawns and flaming flower-beds, but who still want a line of demarcation at the edges of their property, could use these little low fences to great advantage, covered with Nasturtiums, with white or yellow Jasmine, with climbing Roses, with Passion Vine, or with any of the hundred and one creepers which combine profusion of bloom and colour with density of foliage; and the effect would be charming. And in that land where bamboo is not, but wire is, the result desired could be obtained at little or big cost, as the owner pleased. Variety of effect would be endless.

Another style of open fence, although not a common one, is of living Bamboo, set in at a sharp angle, and tied in a lattice pattern. It is exquisitely pretty, with the delicate leaves and shining green or yellow stems outlined against the sky. Our Willows, which in appearance so closely resemble the Bamboo, although they are far removed in species, could be used with good effect in the same way. A pergola of Willows, leading to the ornamental water which so many gardens boast nowadays, would be a charming thing, first to leap out in the spring, and last, when its silvery leaves have turned,



to drop in the autumn. Or an arbour of Willows, beside a pond or brook at an old-fashioned country place, would be a constant delight; for the Willow leaves, like the Aspens, are always fluttering, and give one the sense of a breeze even when there is none.

My sailor husband tells me that in Bermuda, Oleanders, crimson, pink, and white, are planted in interlacing hoops to form a fence of this kind, and that the effect is beautiful. We tried it in Hong-Kong, but not with much success, as without coral soil in which to plant their roots, Oleanders do not seem to do very well.

In Yokohama, Tokio, Nagasaki, and many other places in Japan, hedges are much used instead of fences. The only wonder is that, in a country where so many Laurels are found, where Camellias and Cryptomerias have their feet on their native heath, and grow with a profusion unknown in other climes, one should ever see anything else. I confess that, in Yokohama, these—in winter—splendid great hedges are in summer a pathetic rather than a beautiful sight. In the August semi-dryness (for no season is really dry in Japan) their glossy leaves are dusty and dirty and dejected-looking, with the melancholy of a satin dress in the gutter, of a man who wears shiny broad-cloth and carries a sandwich board. Such sad spots as the rain leaves on them—the very stains of tears! But, if they are not always



beautiful in summer, for the rest of the year they are beautiful enough to more than compensate, for never were glossy leaves glossier than in this moist climate, and the Japanese clip them, to represent walls, so well that one is not infrequently led to think that solid masonry is underneath, and is covered with shining Ivy without. Sometimes the gateways go still further in imitation of fortress walls, for a bastion or a scarp is thrown out on each side of the entrance—not for defence, of course, but for privacy. In other words, the visitors at the gates do not command a view of the tea-table on the lawn.

Ilex is not infrequently used, and always makes a close, well-covered surface. It has a delicious, pungent smell, and its twigs are fine and strong like steel, so that it would withstand any amount of aggression. These twigs, and those of the Osage Orange of other hedges, are made into the toothpicks for which, in the East, Japan is so famous. Japanese Box, which is not so slow-growing as ours, but has the same sunny-garden smell, is also a favourite. These hedges do not attain a height of more than five or six feet; but those of the Camellia grow very much higher, up to fifteen or even eighteen feet, while the Cryptomerea will soar as high as you like, and still bristle, impassably, with fine bronze needles.

In Tokio, one sees a combination of bamboo

fence below, and wild Orange hedge above, that is very attractive. Doubtless these fences are securely built, but I could not help thinking that, in my childhood's days in the Southern States, it would have been the fence and not the hedge that I should have considered it easier to get through. I remember a thicket of wild Plum,—for, as it was never trimmed, that is what it came to,—in Arkansas, which bore the most delicious, sour red plums that ever a child longed for, regardless of cholera-morbus; and, in Virginia, an Osage Orange hedge that yielded forth beautiful, big, bitter fruit, and protected nothing in particular. Those two hedges were an end, not a means; and how many torn frocks, and bruised knees, and scratched little hands, and how many cruel, horrid tummy-aches they were responsible for! But I cannot remember ever having broken my way through either of them. The Orange hedge I considered much more impassable than the granite walls and wide moats of Fortress Munroe, in which we lived. It seemed to me, therefore, in Japan, highly appropriate that this look of a sally-port should be given to the entrances of these hedge walls, and that the gates of heavy masonry should often appear nearly solid enough to withstand an attack of artillery. I often wondered if, had the positions been reversed in Manchuria, and the Japanese been defending instead of attacking Port Arthur, Osage Orange,

the thorny Bamboo, or the Wild Rose of the Sleeping Princess would not have been planted and intertwined with the wire entanglements, and with the samurai spirit of its defenders the place thus have been made quite impregnable.







DIKORIMA-CUTERED-THILLIS  
MARUTARA, YOUNG, EXOTO





## CHAPTER VII

### GARDEN ARCHITECTURE (GATES, SUMMER- HOUSES, AND BRIDGES)

"He thought he saw a Garden Door  
That opened with a key.  
He looked again, and found it was  
The Double Rule of Three.  
'And all its mystery,' he said,  
'Is clear as day to me.'"

LEWIS CARROLL

AS the Double Rule of Three will never, I fear, be anything but a mystery to me, I can only hope that the bearing of the verse upon Gates may not be too strictly insisted upon. Many parts of a Japanese garden are mysterious and hard to understand; some comprehension of the sentiments which underlie them one can only come at by glimpses of insight into the national character, by moments of clairvoyance that illuminate the subject like flashes of lightning. The key is not in the lock, but in the mind of the garden viewer, in the heart of the garden lover.

But it should not be inferred that Japanese garden gates are dull and uninteresting; that,

because fences conceal, the entrance which reveals takes away the wonder and the charm with it. If the gates opened on nothing at all, like triumphal arches, I should still love them—quaint, intriguing, human notes that they give to the little Japanese landscape inside. They seem so insouciant and inviting, and, though they have their hard and fast regulations governing them, so individual and personal. It is as if a pretty child stood there, in its bright kimono, and said to the passing stranger, in its sweet English, “Will you pliss come in!”

According to the inflexible rule that governs all garden accessories, the gate must correspond in style with the fence, and the fence with the garden; and the garden must have unity in size and character and scope, so that the whole is in proper relation to each part, and each part to the whole. By this time the reader will think that this rule may be taken for granted. but, although I apologize for reiteration, it can hardly have too much stress laid upon it. It is the key-note of the success of the Japanese gardener.

You never see in Japan, as you so often do in other countries, great gates, which could withstand the attack of armies, set in insignificant walls or in light iron fences. My own country is a notable offender in this particular, and beautiful gates of wrought iron or bronze, of the

Italian Renaissance period, give a magnificent entrance to perhaps little and futile grounds, or are inappropriately set in a Tudor wall (built half as high as it should be), or in a modern iron fence. But we are not the only offenders; I could name many English modern parks whose enclosing partitions sin in this way; and here in Hong-Kong one of the most important Government buildings has a fine and impressive gate of wrought iron, with stone and cement and brick pillars, and a lodge, with splendid strutting Sikhs on guard in front of it, and no fence or wall at all at a few feet away from the entrance! This is a Chinese idea, rather, for one often sees all the pomp and display at the doors, while dirt and discomfort reign within; a grand gate to no garden in particular; or an imposing sally-port, with painted cannon, in a city wall which is down in a dozen other places, for the enemy to walk in unhindered.

This is one of the ideas that I am glad to say the Japanese have not imported from the Chinese, although the architectural features of their gates certainly received their character from them. Gate roofs, in particular, are very reminiscent of Chinese ones—only another instance of how this clever race accept what is good and useful, and reject what is not. The roofs, with their upturned corners, beautiful tiles, and lovely curves, are almost the nicest things to be seen in the Celestial Empire; so, when a

Japanese builds an imposing gateway, as he does for his temples, palaces, and important grounds and gardens, he usually puts a roof over it embodying these features.

Of course there are many gates that are gates only, not gateways; modest, absolutely in harmony with their surroundings, simple, and beautiful, though with every detail well worked out. I should like here to put in a little essay on the designs of hinges and bolts and gate fastenings alone, for they deserve it; but I fear that the gentle reader would find even my enthusiasm a cold thing compared with what the mere sight and close examination of these delicate little marvels can arouse. I will content myself, then, by saying that the metal fastenings of Japanese gates are veritable small poems in bronze and iron.

These adjuncts are naturally for wooden gates, which may be magnificent or plain as the case demands; but there are many other wooden gates without ornament except that given by the use of beautifully grained and weather-stained wood, and the exquisite joinery-work of their makers. Then there are countless styles made of bamboo, light and delicate, yet strong. I cannot remember ever seeing, in spite of the fact that the Japanese are the best metal workers in the world, any gates made wholly of bronze, brass, or iron, such as one observes wonderful examples of in Italy, France,

and Germany. This is doubtless because the Japanese ideas of buildings are not carried out in the imperishable materials that have, fortunately for us, been the old-time method of European builders. Japanese houses and temples<sup>1</sup> are of wood and paper, of bamboo and thatch, and not of the granite they have in such profusion, or of the imperishable bricks of the Chinese and Egyptians. And their fences and gates correspond.

Every garden must have two gates—one for effect and ‘company,’ and the other for use and necessity. The big gate will be as grand as may be proper to ‘go’ with the garden, but the little one must be humble and insignificant, for the removal of rubbish. I firmly believe that, with the passion of the people for cleaning, this is the entrance nearest to the gardener’s, and, secretly, to the garden’s mistress’s heart. Oh, the luxury, to their fastidious minds, in the necessity of constant sweeping which the autumn must bring! I used to long to be at it myself, except that Japanese methods are back-breaking to other races, for their sweeping brooms and the toys that do duty as rakes and hoes require, even with their short stature, that the body be bent nearly double. And how imposingly tall I used to feel, and what shouts of delighted

<sup>1</sup> Japanese temples have from time immemorial been rebuilt every twenty years. They are decorated again in the same manner and all is rededicated.



laughter it evoked, when I essayed the task. But the broom and I never reached the gate together!

Some big entrances have a little wicket gate beside them, for convenience, but these would be only in the great places, where a porter's lodge and big double doors would imply the need of a more modest entrée for foot-visitors. In these fine gateways all the elaboration of carved wood, splendid roofs, and, perhaps, lacquered decorations of eaves, would be found; in others the timbers might be left rough, the roof thatched, or the latter be itself but a cross piece of wood, planed and capped with metal, or rough hewn, with upturned curves like a torii, or with bark and moss upon it as it was brought from the forest. Sometimes it might be only a trellis, with a lovely creeper depending from it as a decoration. Where an open fence of bamboo, with twining Roses or Wistaria, is used, this would be the appropriate sort of gate to combine with it.

Light gates of bamboo, or trellis gates, are often used to lead from one part of a garden to another, and so are those picturesque ones, previously spoken of, with thatched or shingled roofs, made of mellow, silvery old wood. The latter suggest—but for the wooden tablet suspended in the middle, which gives the name of the garden, or recites, in native characters, some poetic sentiment which describes it—the

ancient lich-gates of England. One dear old weather-beaten gate of the sort at Kyoto transported me to Essex so instantly that I half expected the rickshaw coolie to address me in that flat county's drawl.

A fir tree is the proper adornment of any style of gate, but is happiest, I think, near this last-named kind, with its silvery posts and thatched top. An example of this may be seen in Mr. Tyndale's picture, facing page 244.

There is much sentiment attached to gateways. At the New Year, if it has no Pine tree by its side, or even if it has, the door is adorned with Pine branches, signifying 'long life.' Then there are gourds for 'plenty,' and paper *gohei* for 'luck,' or religion, or spirituality.<sup>1</sup>

The Plum tree is also a very popular tree to plant beside the gate, and that, of course, also signifies spiritual beauty. But peace and plenty must ever be at your gates, in sentiment if not in reality, at the beginning of each new year.

Arbours, or summer-houses, are almost as necessary to gardens—at least, to the big ones—as is the view itself. Even in small grounds a little shield from the sun and rain—strictly to scale, of course—will be found. The rain falls in Japan, as it does in other places,

<sup>1</sup> When a girl is married, a fire is lit at the gate of her old home to announce her 'death' to that household.

on just and unjust, on rich and poor alike; so the poor man has his garden umbrella—a huge one—ready, as in England he has his cotton ‘gamp,’ and it is not unlike an umbrella, or big mushroom,<sup>1</sup> often, in shape. It is permanently set up in the garden. A single post supports its flat round top, frequently left rough, and with the prettily marked bark still upon it. Some single posts have square or octagonal tops, but they still suggest umbrellas. There are larger rest-places with the supports at both ends, like gate tops, with scornful, upcurved corners to their roofs, which are delightfully picturesque. Others, again, have four skeleton posts, and two matted or bamboo sides, with latticed openings and seats—not for sitting on, as we do, but for the *suari* position, resting on the feet; so that the seat is rather wider than ours would be.

From rustic shelters, up through the simple bamboo arbours, and rough, shed-like structures, we make our way to elaborate and beautiful little houses of one or two matted rooms designed for the ceremonial tea-drinking. In these a very delicate perfection of detail may be found, as in the most exquisite of dwelling-houses, although only intended for occasional use, as a real summer-house would be. For everything that is useful must have beauty, in Japan,

<sup>1</sup> An example of this sort of garden shelter can be seen in Picture 24, page 254.

and everything that has beauty must be used—that is, enjoyed, appreciated. The garden must be fair and pleasant, to give contentment; and, as rain and wet would on so many days prevent this, a shelter must be provided which will delight the eye and add to the sense of comfort and peace.

The open sorts, quite unwallled, have taken their seating ideas from China, and quaint blue and white porcelain barrels, perforated in a design that will help to avoid any appearance of heaviness, are placed for guests to sit on, foreign fashion, with the legs hanging down. One seldom sees them used, but they make a pretty note of colour. Two examples of them may be seen in the picture of the garden near the Miyako Hotel in Kyoto, facing page 170, but in this case without a roof over them. The Chinese use them very frequently as pedestals for flower-pots with fine specimen plants in them for exhibition. Blue and white is not the only ware, however. The Japanese make them in a pale water-green, as well as in a stronger green that I am inclined to think must have come from their Celestial cousins, for it is seen everywhere in China.

Other seats are plain, low, wooden platforms, shaped like beds without upper posts. A scarlet blanket is put on top, or a straw mat, and on this the guests squat and drink

tea—for this is the usual garden seat for tea-houses. Over these the porch roof sometimes extends, as in the picture of the tea-house in Mamyama Park, Kyoto, shown facing page 92, or a creeper-clad trellis may protect it from the sun.

A Japanese garden bridge is, to my un-mathematical mind, the most delightful sort possible (although the delight is full of the spice of variety), because it is seldom the shortest route between the two sides of a stream, and it never even pretends that it has been erected to save time. A garden, more especially a garden in Japan, is a place to loiter in; the bridges, the little islands of the lake, the summer-houses on the shore, the seats in the shade, the very stepping-stones, which do not help one's feet to hasten, are all means to that end. You do not come into the garden to make money; you do not come to exercise, and to hurl balls about; you do not pass through it to save time, but to spend it, and to spend it laughingly, contentedly, tranquilly, taking in through all your senses its pleasant suggestion of repose and peace. The goldfish will do the darting about, and we can get our feeling of life and movement in watching them. Or we may follow the flight of the bird we have startled from the Cherry tree, and study the struttings and preenings of the two sparrows that so boldly hop and peck beside the water-basin,



or lazily observe the great velvet-blue butterfly, *cho-cho-no-hana*, or 'insect like a flower,' that flits from bloom to bloom among the Irises, softly, as if they were petals blown by the breeze.

So, if the bridges went matter-of-factly over the stream, we should arrive too quickly, and the end, even of the largest garden, would come all too soon. But, instead, they start boldly at one angle, are seized with an inspiration, as a fish is, in midstream, and dart off on another tack; then, perhaps, may be happily reached the best spot from which to view the Wistaria reflected in the waters below, and so a little resting-place is fixed, and after awhile the bridge goes on unconcernedly to a place on the opposite bank.

One of the most attractive sorts of bridges, the *yatsu hashi* style, is really little more than glorified stepping-stones, long slabs of rock or of wood that go zigzag fashion through an oozy bed of Irises.<sup>1</sup> Like a bird's low flight, skimming this way and that only a few inches above the water, one can see into the very violet depths, into the golden triangles that nestle in the hearts of the flowers; the glittering edges of the sword-like leaves might almost cut one's feet, so close is the flower-viewer to the object of his admiration.

<sup>1</sup> An example of this sort may be seen in Mr. Tyndale's other book of Japanese pictures, on p. 72 of *Japan and the Japanese*.



Even when the bridge does go directly from point to point, without lingering to enjoy itself on the way, the Japanese usually manage to avoid the straight line which is not that of beauty. Whether it is for that reason, or because the little stream may swell with the spring rains, so as to make additional height in the middle a safe precaution, most bridges, whether of wood or of stone, arch a little in the centre. Some arch a good deal, so that, when completed, by their reflection in the water below a perfect circle is formed. 'Full-moon' bridges these are called, and they come from China. And so steep is the incline, that, unless little steps are taken, it is hard, if not impossible, to walk over them. In the background of the picture of geishas fishing at Kameido, facing this page, two specimens are to be seen, but without the arch completed below. The naughty little *nésans* who bring one tea there giggle with joy at the efforts of people to scramble over them (for these are without steps), and greet the foreigner who succeeds in doing it with little tinkling shrieks of delight. The innocent appreciation by the Japanese of the very mildest jest is enough to set one up as a wit for life. One feels a real humorist there who has only made a mistake in pronunciation, and a master-wit who climbs the round bridge at Kameido.

Of bridges not so much curved a good example may be seen in the picture of the









Choin-in Temple garden (page 176) as well as in the picture of Nami-Kawa San's garden, facing page 160. It springs, a solid arch of granite, from the shore to the island, and two mandarin ducks, too pretty to seem real, stand on it, admiring the images of themselves in the smooth water beneath.

Then there are stone bridges for highly finished gardens, architectural in character. Almost all temple grounds have them, with carved hand-rails. In other places, bridges are of wood of beautiful grain, or, it may be, lacquered red. The most famous one of this sort is the red lacquered bridge at Nikko by which only royalty may cross. There is great variety in the style of wooden bridges, for the Japanese are wonderful workers in that material. One quaint kind of bridge is of faggots, laid in bundles on horizontal cross-pieces, and then covered with sod.<sup>1</sup> In the pretty garden of the Mikado Hotel, at Miyajima, a dozen of such structures crossed and recrossed the tumbling mountain torrent which formed the principal theme of the composition. This type is only suitable, of course, for the wilder sort of garden, and, when this place was aflame with autumn Maples, even the gods of fire and of water themselves need not have disdained its use.

But I love them all, the bridges of Japan, simple or ornate, of logs or of carven stone, of

<sup>1</sup> As shown in the Kuradani Temple picture, facing page 136.



faggots or of lacquered wood ; for it is not of what they are made, or whither they lead, that is their charm, but that they keep one secure above the water, where is the garden's source of life which in its cool depths reflects and repeats the trees, the flowers, and the sky.

## CHAPTER VIII

### WELLS, WATER-BASINS, ETC.

"The Morning Glory  
Her leaves and bells has bound  
My bucket handle round.  
I could not break the bands  
Of those soft hands.  
The bucket and the well I left;  
Lend me some water, for I come bereft."

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD'S TRANSLATION

NOT only from practical utility, but from the ethical and æsthetic suggestion which water makes to the Japanese mind also, are wells a necessity in their gardens. So much stress is laid on their ornamental qualities, as an aid to a garden's beauty, that often there are two wells, one with artistic surroundings in keeping with the whole scheme, and another nearer the house, less elaborate (though never ugly in design), for constant use. But wherever it is placed,—and of course there are rules as to where it may be and where it may not (and how the water diviner gets over that difficulty I really cannot say),—it must be ornamental or simple according to the design of

the grounds in which it is found. There are the usual three degrees of finish : highly wrought, medium, and rough. The first, with wood or stone copings, carefully cut, fitted, and planed, is architectural in character, and may be employed in a carefully finished garden. It would probably have a roof over it, similar in character to that of the house itself, or of the summer- or tea-house near it.

The roughest sort would most likely have its coping of unplaned old logs—with moss and worm holes for decoration—perhaps crossed, like a ‘rustic’ picture frame, at the corners, and tied with dark wood rope or dyed vine fibres. Or it might be of rough uncut stones, fitted together like an old well-top at home, and perhaps cemented crudely round the well hole, but all kept purposely free and unfinished in style. This would look casual enough, but the stones would be secure, and the whole structure safe as a church. The middle degree would, of course, be more carefully arranged than this, but not so well finished as the first.

Mr. Conder tells us that “ The well frequently assists to express the mood of the garden, and some designers have used it to imply a sentiment, not unlike the familiar Scriptural analogy of Eternal Life.” I am afraid I must disagree with this opinion a little. A poetic Japanese friend laid great stress on other open spaces of

water expressing the garden's mood, as they reflect the colour and changes of the sky ; the well, dark and shadowed, sombre though pure, remains the constant and unfailing spring of life, the soul of the garden. When that fails the flowers wither and fade, the leaves and mosses dry and shrivel, the trees, even, droop and die. The garden's spirit is gone !

I like the idea, more especially in that land of unfailing springs, for there it has not the sadness, the tragedy even, that the sentiment might suggest in places where the wells are not of eternal life, but even of a briefer space than man's. One might remark—but luckily it has nothing to do with gardens—that some of their wells, whose water comes from but little below the surface, where it is contaminated by the drainings from house and yard, and is trustingly used for drinking, are veritable wells of death, not life ! This is one of the reasons why tea, the national beverage of the country, is so much safer to drink than the favourite tippie of my own land—'ice-water.' (It is not 'iced,' but ice-water in name as in reality. Lumps of ice fill the tumbler and a little water is put with them. 'Iced' water means water cooled in bottles on ice.)

The Japanese have many legends and superstitions of poisoned and of haunted wells. But even where no story is told of goblins, they have always a respect for the spirits which frequent

water. Lafcadio Hearn tells the following tale of one haunted well :—

“ Himeji contains the ruins of a great castle of thirty turrets ; and a daimio used to dwell therein, whose revenue was one hundred and fifty-six thousand koku of rice. Now, in the house of one of that daimio’s chief retainers was a maid-servant of good family, whose name was O Kiku ; and the Kiku signifies a Chrysanthemum flower. Many precious things were entrusted to her charge, and among other things ten costly dishes of gold. One of these was suddenly missed and could not be found ; and the girl, being responsible therefor, and knowing not otherwise how to prove her innocence, drowned herself in a well. But ever thereafter her ghost, returning nightly, could be heard counting the dishes slowly, with sobs : *Ichimai, Nimai, Sanmai, Yomai, Gomai, Rokumai, Shichimai, Hachimai, Kumai*.

“ Then there would be heard a despairing cry and a loud burst of weeping, and again the girl’s voice counting the dishes plaintively : ‘ One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine.’

“ Her spirit passed into the body of a strange little insect, whose head faintly resembled that of a ghost with long dishevelled hair ; and it is called the *O Kiku-Mushi*, or the ‘ Fly of O Kiku ’ ; and it is found, they say, nowhere save in Himeji.

A famous play was written about O Kiku, which is still acted in all the popular theatres, entitled *Banshu-O-Kiku-no-Sara-ya-shiki*, or 'The Manor of the Dish of O Kiku of Banshu.' "

Even with Western nations the old well seems still to retain a few shreds of the romance of bygone years, when it was a meeting-place for village youths and maidens, and love-making and water-drawing went on simultaneously. But 'laid on' water has driven out even the homely pump that superseded the 'old wooden buckets.' Wells, to us nowadays, are out of date; and although we preserve an affection for them, as we do for old furniture, they no longer form a striking feature of our gardens or back yards. The Japanese, on the contrary, make the well the pivot of a charming bit of scenery, the central part of a picture which is composed of the well cover and coping; with its proper complement of 'Standing' or 'Recumbent' rocks, a stone lantern, perhaps, and an Azalea bush, clipped round; a clump of Irises, not too close to the stepping-stones; and over all a drooping Pine tree, or perhaps a Cherry, to carry on, in spring (and even in winter, for its bare bark and branches are lovely then in their own way), the tender, penetrating sense of beauty and of continued life. Seen from any point such a group makes a picture; and, what is far more, to a Japanese mind it conveys its



delicate but perpetual suggestion of the hidden depths of serene and beautiful and unhurried living.

Well borders never sacrifice picturesqueness to an austere usefulness, nor is the careless look of natural beauty obtained at the expense of safety. Even a log-bound mouth, though it be full of holes and covered with moss, will be quite safe and secure ; and a cover, either of boards, of woven bamboo, or a straw mat, will protect the water from pollution by fallen leaves or inquisitive insects, and, where there are children, will be strong enough to keep them on the right side of it. Sometimes a pretty thatched roof will go over well, pulley, and cross-beam, buckets and all, or a smaller roof of boards may protect only the pulley top. With this style irregular stepping-stones would be used ; but where the well border is of squarely hewn stone, or of cement, the stepping-stones would be squarely cut to correspond, and this dignified well would have a cover of severer model also. These roofs, on two legs, look very much like the old lich-gates of England, and are spoken of in the chapter on fences and gates.

Arrangements for drawing up the water vary a good deal. Sometimes there is a regular old-fashioned well-sweep (the Egyptian *shadoof*), such as may still be seen in some retired country places in our own lands ; and sometimes it is

a long bamboo, with a wooden bucket tied on the end, with which one jabs at the water, as if one were scooping up crabs; but usually it is a delightful affair of a rope over a pulley, with a bucket tied at each end. The pulley must, of course, have a cross-beam support to hold it in position over the well, and sometimes a leaning tree is utilized for this. The tree then becomes trebly useful, as it acts as support, as cover, and as decoration.

The buckets are simply and chastely shaped, usually round, and taller than ours are, with the handle a continuation of the middle staves carried up, and a wooden cross-piece on top. The design is so pretty and so popular that it is used for many other articles, such as jardinières and flower-holders. These buckets, strange to relate, should not be moss-bound or old-looking. New and beautifully white wood, unpainted, is used, and must be often renewed, or at least constantly cleaned and scrubbed, to keep them so bright and fresh-looking. This is, of course, owing to the national passion for cleanliness, and perhaps a little because the artistic eye of the Japanese dwells lovingly on the beautiful graining of their woods. In the many parts of Japan where sulphur is found in the water, that substance has dyed the wood the most lovely and varying shades of silvery amethyst, and the buckets look as if made of the rarest of grained and coloured stone.

But although the perfection of each detail of the accessories of a well is so carefully looked after, each is only a part of the whole, and must be in keeping with it. And that whole, the well, is but a part of a greater whole, the garden, and the garden part of the country itself. There must be no jarring note.

I like to think that the wells, in their grounds, are more than places from which to draw water, more than picturesque adjuncts to their gardens, more than pretty foregrounds to a picture ; that they are an expression of the whole national character. We are too apt to judge of these people hastily, and, because they are so charming on the surface, to think that they have no depths. I believe that, as deep in the heart of their gardens an eternal water springs, so in the hidden depths of their natures, charming, gay, polite, responsive, there lies the eternal fount of deep spiritual feeling ; that the flowers of their gracefulness and tact and courtesy would wither, as those in their gardens would, if they were not watered and refreshed from the recesses of that deep and ever-bubbling well.

**WATER-BASINS.**—Those beautiful and artistic objects for holding water, in the shape of bowls, basins, and vases, have so often excited envy in my heart that I approach the subject with some timidity. In these indispensable adjuncts to a Japanese garden, these people (than whom

the Greeks and Etruscans never turned out more classically lovely although simple designs) have reached a very high level of art. I wonder why they never seem to be mentioned in the artistic rhapsodies of writers on things Japanese. It is a well-known fact that however common the object, however modest and lowly the use to which it is allotted, taste and care and love—for it comes to that—is put into the shape and the decoration of it. The latches of their doors, the screws of their cabinets, the shapes of their wooden water buckets, the patterns on their towels, indeed everything they have, either for use or for beauty, is adorned, and well adorned too. And so these stone basins close to the veranda, used for washing hands in a simple peasant's modest domain, may be of so truly good and artistic a shape as to be worthy of a place near the work of the early Greeks. This is not in the least an exaggeration; indeed, it is the latter who are honoured in the comparison: for in dignity, simplicity, chastity, and restraint in decoration the Japanese are second to none, and yet this is not at the expense of beauty and of the greatest conceivable variety.

I would not say, nevertheless, that all water-basins are of a sort to withstand the test of comparison with those of the acknowledged masters of form, the Greeks, for many can only be compared with Nature's own hewing,

being simple stones of a good shape, roughly hollowed out to hold water. These usually have a wooden lid, to keep the water inside cool and clean, and to guard it from the chance pollution of a falling leaf or a flying insect. Those made in the shape of bowls, jars, vases, or pillars (square or round), generally have a top too, but of a sort more suitable to their shape.

Some shapes of the fantastic sort are frankly ugly. I can concede no claim except that of quaintness to those basins which are shaped like Fujiyama, the adored, whose crater forms the well, and whose cone is sawed off ridiculously, in order to make the water easily reached. As for the 'half-moon bridges,' and some other designs, I cannot understand how such artistic people as the Japanese can endure them. They are as hideous and absurd as are the china slippers and ladies' boots of porcelain that one sometimes sees used for flowers in old-fashioned houses at home, or as the little alabaster models of the 'Taj' which I saw offered for sale, as pendants, in India. It is the more generally approved plain and classic shapes towards which my enthusiasm is directed.

Frequently these basins have water running in, over, and out again, where there is a stream of any sort on the premises; in which case, of course, no top is necessary. This type is very











WHITE LILIES: THE CASTLE BOAT  
1891



attractive too, for often, with the ingenuity in simple mechanical contrivances which the Japanese are apt to show, the water is piped in picturesque bamboo instead of the ugly iron or lead pipes that we should use if we were doing it.

But contrast the whole washing arrangement—the beautifully formed basin; the daintily contrived pipes and drain; the well-shaped stepping-stone in front of it, on which to stand during the operation of ladling out water and throwing it over the head and hands; the delightful screen-fence of bamboo, with its graceful plant or young tree beside it—contrast these with what a workman or artisan in those we call civilized countries would have. He might perhaps indulge in a tin, or at the best an enamelled basin (the chances are in favour of a line or two of grime for interior decoration), with an ugly iron sink to receive the dirty water, and a fragment of yellow soap on a greasy half-saucer, as the last touch of beauty, beside him!

Water, and its æsthetic idea of moral as well as physical cleanliness, is most important to the Japanese, more particularly near temples. In these grounds the water-basin, according to the scale of the design, is of a size to correspond; so that it is sometimes really too large for its purpose. In such a case a ‘working model’ is put behind a screen for use, while the big and

impressive basin acts only as an ornament. It is treated, however, not as a drone, but exactly as if it commanded the respect of utility by occupying its proper place, and is given the same relative position it would hold if it were really a worker.

I do not know that the water-basins which are placed at the beginning of the avenues leading to Shinto temples, at which worshippers cleanse themselves before going up the steps to clap their hands and pray, can be classed exactly with these. They are frequently large square blocks of stone, partially hollowed out at the top, and suggest ancient sarcophagi. They have religious designs, such as the *Svastika*, *Senfuku-rin-so*, and *Ho-Kwan* (all essentially Buddhist symbols), carved upon their sides, and, above the water, are often hung beautifully coloured and decorated towels,—the votive offerings of pilgrims,—which wave and flutter like tiny flags in the breeze, and are reflected in the water beneath.

These tanks resemble the basins of holy water in a Roman Catholic church, as we discovered once at Gongen Temple beside Hakone Lake. While I was sketching near by, my three children, in playing about, discovered that the big stone basin was dry, and further, much to their satisfaction, that it made a most desirable 'steamer-boat.' Their nurse, who was in attendance, saw no reason against their



climbing into it, since their little Japanese amah did not suggest that there was any irreverence in this course ; so, with many tootings and shoutings and high glee, they were just setting sail with the half of the fluttering towels above them (the juvenile imagination can overcome everything), when the chief priest happened to pass by. I heard his sharp and angry voice, and rushed to the scene of disorder just in time to see him roughly, and almost savagely, ordering the children out, throwing as far away as he could the little twigs of bamboo with which they had been pretending to row—for they had turned the great stone tomb into a steamer, a sailing ship, and a rowboat at one and the same time. I began with the most abject apologies, which, however, were so rudely and ungraciously received that I ended by telling him that my children were doing no more than I had seen many Japanese children do in the same place, without his having offered any objection ; and that if he had stopped the latter, the nurse and amah would never have allowed these foreign children to touch what was regarded as sacred. But a rude Japanese is such a wonderful exception to the national rule of politeness, that I can only believe that my unwitting little people had committed some heinous crime of disrespect to a sacred object. However, even in that event, his breach was worse than theirs, for, according to the Japanese code, few things



can warrant rudeness to foreigners, and nothing can excuse unkindness to children. If water and the ideas appertaining to it are holy, not less so are the little hands which touch it and the vessels which contain it.

## CHAPTER IX

### LANDSCAPE GARDENS

"One says your little garden stands  
Encompassèd by trees.  
I speak not loud but my heart replies :  
My garden's bounded by the skies,  
All's mine that my mind's heart sees."

PRACTICALLY speaking, all gardens in Japan are landscape gardens, and one can almost turn the phrase inside out and declare that all landscapes in Japan are gardens. The gardens are reproductions, on a small scale, of the scenery of Japan, and the scenery of Japan is a large edition of its gardens. It is not a case, however, of the chicken and the egg, for the gardens do not claim to have appeared first, and to have set the fashion for the landscape. The art, as has been said before, originally came from China, but it was so breathed upon by the national genius, so enriched by the inborn poetic nature of its Japanese interpreters, that it became, in the truest sense, a Japanese institution.

I once got hold of a literal translation of old Omar's *Rubaiyát*, with the Persian text in parallel columns. An Indian scholar, a high-caste Brahmin, was good enough to give me his views on delicate and elusive bits in the original which had escaped the translator, and he read aloud the sonorous, smooth-flowing rhymes in a voice which was itself poetry. FitzGerald's so-called translations appeared only as foot-notes here and there, at which in the beginning I wondered—but not later. The literal renderings, in prose, seemed bare and mean (although in themselves remarkable enough, all things considered) compared with the rich and varied imagery, the depth of thought and of feeling which the Irish poet had read into them. The Persian sounded beautiful, it is quite true, but what is sound, in such a case, compared with the meaning of the words! As regards the great masters of music, the sound is more than words can express, and their continued and inexhaustible charm lies in the fact that they lead on the imagination to fields where words are useless. In poetry, the thought is the key that unlocks the door of the imagination, and the music of it is only an adornment.

So, in the Japanese translations of the Chinese art of garden making, as in FitzGerald's Omar, there is more of thought, of beauty, of richness, and fulness of aim and scope, than ever was dreamed of by the originators.

Chinese gardens, of many sorts, are not unknown to me. Such survivals as exist of palace grounds I have written of elsewhere. Outdoor enclosures in their formal grandeur are so architectural in conception, and so combined with the involved details of buildings, of walls and of gates, that one thinks of the trees and the flowers as adjuncts of the builder's art, and not as inmates of gardens. They are as Palms in handsome jars in a drawing-room, which we do not therefore call a conservatory. Of Chinese temple enclosures—those green-bowered places which almost alone have trees, on hill-sides or on plains (these because of their bareness being yearly scourged by droughts and devastating floods)—I have also spoken; as well as of the private gardens of rich men—high-walled, elaborate, magnificent, from which Nature, in her shyness and in consequence, and sweet, coy innocence, her calm and restful peace, has been shut out.

Yes, it is true that China suggested the idea of gardens to Japan, and for this all honour to her; but let it also be conceded at the same time that wherever Japan adhered closely to the modes and expressions of that original idea, the main charm of her own compositions was gone.

The Chinese said: "Let us plant trees and flowering shrubs and sweet-smelling herbs near our houses, to add to them beauty, and for a

pleasant place wherein to walk when the sun is hot and the heart is weary." And the thought was a good one, and Japan adopted it, as she adopts to this day anything that strikes her as true, or useful, or excellent; and so long as she kept only to this, and let Nature inspire her,—or her own artists, whose guide was Nature, laid out and arranged these open spaces about her homes and high places,—all was well. But when she slavishly imitated the Chinese interpreters of her own idea, she lapsed. I firmly believe that if Japan had continued to copy even and only the *gardens* of China, and had gone her course in other ways, she would not be to-day one of the great nations of this earth. For I assert unfalteringly that, her gardens being an expression of the national spirit, the beautiful outward and visible sign of the country's inward and spiritual grace, if they had not existed in their present state of evolution Japan would have become, like China, corrupt, artificial, mercenary, of few extraordinary private virtues, and of no civic and public ones. This is no exaggeration. I have tried through my entire book to show how Japanese gardens are the outcome of Japanese spirit, are typical of her advance, spiritual and moral as well as artistic. Their gardening is not so much an art as an evolution—the growth of character; and if they had not evolved in this direction in exactly the way they have, they would not now be the people

they have become, and their gardens would speak a different language, their message would not be the same.

A quotation from Mr. W. G. Aston's *Japanese Literature* will, perhaps, illustrate my meaning. He is speaking of the days of the Shogunate, when everything Chinese was admired and copied at the expense of all that was fresh and unspotted in literature, art, manners, and morals in Japan :—

“ As time went on, the code of morals derived from the teachings of the philosophers of China, and expounded and applied by their Japanese followers, gained in precision and detail. But what had originally been a wholesome and vivifying influence became a burden to the nation. It fell most heavily on the samurai, all whose actions were governed by strict rules and punctilious etiquette, in a way that was fatal to any reasonable share of personal freedom. In short, the great fault of the later Shogunate was over-regulation in almost every department of life. I was one day walking with the late Count Terashima, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, in one of those beautiful creations of the landscape gardener's art which abound in Tokio. He pointed to a grove of Fir trees, standing by an artificial lake, which had been trimmed and trained by generations of gardeners into quaint and not unpleasing, but stunted,



shapes. 'There,' he said, 'is an emblem of the Japanese nation under the *Bakufu* (Shogunate). That is what Chinese learning did for us.' "

But, luckily for the lover of Nature, as well as for the lover of this nation, these artificialities, these conventions, could not permanently hold the affection and respect of the people. As they threw off the yoke of the Regents, so they cast from them the slavish imitations of Chinese literary forms, arts, and crafts, and allowed the native genius to assert itself. From the beginning, we are told, in order to keep up the standard of landscape gardening, a bad design was considered unlucky, and the minds of sages, artists, and philosophers combined not only to prevent any decline in the science, but even to improve it and enlarge its scope.

I add another quotation, from a quaint and delightful book which has just come to me from the Kyoto Commercial Museum—the *Official Guide* :—

“ ‘The growth of the gardens shows the prosperity of Rakuyo, while their lack speaks of her decline,’ observed a Chinese writer in speaking of the relation that the art of gardening bore to Rakuyo, an ancient Chinese metropolis. ‘And Rakuyo is the best barometer registering the state of affairs in the country. Her rise means peace and happiness in the nation, while









her fall indicates the decline of the country.' The statement brings out the truth that gardening is the product of peaceful and luxurious life."

Where an effect of Nature was the first consideration always, even the degeneration into what the Chinese considered an effect of Nature could not permanently injure the art. It was, in this, as when in our day modern artists imitate the 'Colourists,' the 'Impressionists,' men who, whatever their faults, are thinking and working from their own ideas. So long as Monet and Manet, and half a dozen others, paint Nature as *they* see her, all is well. Even when the 'little men' paint Nature as they think Monet would see her, not much harm is done, for he who imitates can hardly himself become a prophet. Thus, all who are worthy go back to the original source. The decline would come if the imitation of imitation set in, when a vicious arithmetical progression to the debasement of art would ensue—an inconceivable state of affairs with the great Teacher, Nature, always before us! So also the landscape artist in Japan, whatever restrictions and classic formulæ he has had laid upon him, has first, and last, and all the time, the direct command to consult Nature. So obligatory is this rule, that, as I have frequently had occasion to say in these pages, very often, even to the initiated,



man-made gardens seem merely the happy chance effect of wild Nature alone.

On my eventful first visit to Japan I had the lucky opportunity of witnessing the construction of a landscape garden. Everything except the ground itself was put there according to a well-thought-out plan—the rocks, the trees, the shrubs, and even the waterfall; and yet, when I left the place five months later, it was as if it had always been. A sloping hill-side had been chosen (the house, I regret to say, was one of the ugliest specimens of ‘foreign’—that is to say, our mid-Victorian—architecture ever built), and another part of the same grounds had already been completed before I arrived.

First of all, some of the hill was hollowed out to make an irregular valley, or rather gorge, and near the top of this a group of rough blocks of granite was firmly embedded. There is a builder’s rule which was observed by the Greeks, laying down the proportion of an upright column which should be underground; this was, to the best of my recollection, one-sixth of the total length. Those Japanese gardeners did better than that: two-thirds of these great stones were underground, and such close-growing evergreen shrubs and dwarf Azaleas were planted near that it would have taken more severe earthquakes than we had that summer to dislodge them. Then moss and lichens were fastened

with damp earth into crevices, and carefully watered several times a day, so that the stones looked—as, of course, they were—ages old. As this was the part of the composition nearest the house, it was rather more ornate in character than that of the lower slopes, which fell away to a mass of Laurel and Maple trees at the edge of the grounds.

Now, of course, this garden, with the house on the top of the hill, broke from the outset the rules and customs with regard to garden making; therefore, if the people who constructed it had been unintelligent ants, only faithfully copying what the other ants who preceded them had done, there would have been no garden on that steep hillside at all, or rather, perhaps, no house at the top of it. They were original workers, and, while they adhered to the foundation principle of presenting a view of natural scenery, they could hardly stick to any of the classic injunctions as to how to attain this end. Everything had to be modified to fit the case, and a most charming hill garden, with the main interest at the top, was the result. Paths and stepping-stones led downward and upward, with clumps of flowering trees (at least, they would flower the following spring) placed irregularly in happily chosen spots. There was a little shrine (a shade too new and red, just then, at which the Azaleas spoke rudely, under their breath), and there were quaint, storm-driven

Pines, set in calmly without any fuss, as if a Pine, after attaining a certain size, were not one of the hardest things in the world to transplant! Sir Francis Piggott tells me that in Tokio the shrubs and trees in the garden of a rented house, if set in by the tenant, belong to him, and he may and does remove them when he changes to another abode. One can easily believe this statement when one has seen these small, busy people take up a good-sized tree and replant it. It never seems to occur to them that it may not grow. The transplanted one accepts the changed conditions without shedding a leaf. So these Pines and Maples, Plum trees and Cherry trees, Camellias and Azaleas, like happy brides in new homes, settled down cheerfully in this garden of love.

The water (which was humbly piped in bamboo) trickled down over the mossy stones as if it had been born to that rocky bed ; and under the thatched roof of the 'Scene-viewing Place' on the crest of the hill (with one's back to the house), the satisfied visitor could gaze away, over Maples and Birches and the clustering roofs of the fishing village, to the ever-changing, changeless sea, content—content.

On the other side of the house was a more conventional garden,—or at least it was laid out according to the classic rules of Japanese art, and was more like the usual places one sees in that country,—if to Western eyes it seemed a spot

by itself. There was a tiny pond with goldfish and flashing carp; a neatly cobbled beach, like the shores of a mountain lake, made firm ground on which the visitor could walk to the very brink, and there, from a convenient (and dry) rock, watch the play of those winged things of the water. On another bank, some Irises and Reeds 'broke' the clear edges of the lake, and lengthened themselves in cool green reflections. There was a well, with a quaint old well-sweep and bucket, and a moss-'broidered stone lantern crouching beneath a little Peach tree. A kind of pergola, already brave with Wistaria tendrils,—but until that should attain a fuller growth, delicately draped with Virginia Creeper,—led one with loitering feet to the Japanese quarters again. South and West this garden lay, and all day long the sun hung over it, and the flowers (for there were pots and pots of them of all sorts there) made liquid purple pools of shadows on the warm earth. At night the moon came there and picked out all the white blossoms for its own, and laid a long silver torch upon the pool, and called out new scents and fragrances from leaf and flower that even the sun had not evoked. My windows looked on this, and the Lady from California was led to demand more than once what I was owling out of the window again for,—if I had ever seen the flowers of her native state I should not be able to look at these poor makeshift blooms

again. It is the only thing that has ever reconciled me to my sad lack in not having seen the splendid flora of California !

As I said at the beginning of this chapter, practically every garden in Japan is a landscape garden, but I have concluded that the description of one is as good as the mere naming of a hundred. Frankly, too, I do not care for those most strict and exalted classic models. I admire Lord Fuji, the ethereal vision (the Japanese make this sacred mountain masculine), too much to care to see him made petty and pretty out of a miniature mound of earth, decked out with dwarf trees. I have too great a respect for the Che Kiang (China Sea), on which I have tossed and suffered, to care to view it in miniature in a temple garden. I love Japan's own beautiful scenery too dearly to want it served up to me like a decorated wedding-cake. Where its gardening rules are properly applied, China forgotten, the source of their inspiration (Nature) unpolluted, she has given us gardens incomparable, landscapes in little, but in truth.



## CHAPTER X

### GREEN GARDENS

“Tranquillity and peace in this still place,  
No more of movement than white birds that stand  
Leg deep in water, silent as the land.  
Oh ! cool green garden, give me of thy grace.”

ONE of the first things that strike the ‘Foreigner’ (a title the Anglo-Saxon will never willingly assume anywhere; and he has to use the word ‘Native,’ in Japan, for the first time without thereby implying a compliment to his own country) is the absence of vivid colour in Japanese gardens. He has come all a-tiptoe with expectation, perhaps, thinking that the land of the flower-loving Japanese will far surpass in brilliancy and splendour of colour the Gorgeous East, as he has seen it in Egypt and India, even in China. He is chilled and saddened by the slanting rain, which he may have hoped would greet him only in Hiroshige’s and Hokusai’s prints; he cannot yet see the beauty in the delicate, pale ribbons of mist that are laid across the landscape; he is outraged, perhaps, that, having travelled so



far to escape his own English climate, he has happened on a wetter example ; he will not see the poetry of its dim distances, the pale beauty of its wan skies ; he is annoyed and disgusted that the peasants wear dull blue, and the high-class people soft greys and mauves and browns, instead of the rainbow-hued kimonos he had looked for ; and he is aggrieved when he visits his first gardens—expecting that there, at least, he will find the colour he has come so far to see—to discover that there are only little bits of country landscape that lie behind the picturesque gates, and that, as likely as not, it is all green—as Nature generally is.

The gnarled old trees are a deep and sombre green, the slender saplings are a delicate golden green (these two types so loved by this gentle nation, who venerate age and adore youth) ; the Pines are a rusty green, the new Reeds by the water are emerald green, the Bamboos and the Willows are silvery green ; the stone lanterns, even, have their embroidery of mossy green, while the very lake itself, overhung by trees and shrubs, is of that cool green that only shadowed nooks know. But who, at first, thinks of even all this range and variety of green as colour ? Where we had looked for a passion of scarlet Azaleas, a riot of purple Wistaria, a mingling of many-hued Lilies, and of Chrysanthemums that should not be like any that we had ever seen at flower shows at home—

who but is a little disappointed to find only the rest and serenity of green? Do all the books form a conspiracy to lie? These artists, too—has even Mr. Tyndale joined the league to deceive? Or where do they find the flowers and the colours that they paint? Shall we, too, join them, and waste away our letters of credit by buying highly-coloured picture post cards, and try to delude ourselves, or, better still, our friends at home, into the belief that we have seen these colours, these gardens?

Now, the truth is, as usual, that we can see only one side of the crystal of verity at a time, and it has many facets. While it is a fact that the basis of Japanese gardening is greenness, its fundamental purpose being a place for peace and repose and for quiet contemplation of Nature, which that harmonious, living colour assists more than any other in securing, yet it does not follow that it is nothing else but this. While vegetation is the last thing to be considered in making a garden,—it being the flesh that covers the bones, or the stones, of its skeleton,—the green might be regarded as the natural complexion, and the basis on which the flowers of dress appear to adorn. It is all another exemplification of how close to Nature these gardens are, that as with her green may be found the year round, so may colour, too, if one knows where to look for it. And although it is easily possible for a man to enter twenty

gardens in, say, the Japanese July, and to find no flowers, it would be very hard for him to go into threes in April, and see no Cherry blossoms, Irises, Wistaria, or Azaleas. All gardens may, therefore, be said to be green gardens at some time of the year, though few can be called so always.

I venture to assert that, in spite of all that one reads in gardening books on Japan, as to their coldness and sombreness of colouring, no gardeners in the world make a more intelligent effort to have a floral succession the year round than they do; for, with this poetic people, it must be understood that the autumn Maples and winter berries would be included with the flowers. And why the babies in their bright kimonos are not placed in the same category it is hard to say.

It is the greatest mistake to think, as is so often maintained, that in a Japanese garden, because its background and leading features are, as they ought to be, green, its planners have arrived at this end through a defective colour sense. It is probably from a different, a less arrogant, and a subtler colour sense than most nations have. My own theory is that different individuals, and even different races, have eyes sensitive to different parts of the spectrum. For instance, I see reds in a landscape where my sailor husband sees greens and blues. On botanizing expeditions here, in Hong-Kong, some of the













party would pass a glowing yellow flower by, but would rescue a tiny purple bloom beside it from what seemed to others of us obscurity. And of those who are most alive to the purple end of the spectrum are the Japanese. It is not, as one hears so often stated, that they do not *see* colour or care for it, but that, instead, being sensitively organized in that respect, they prefer the delicate to the more striking effect ; also, in a way, they are so entirely *en rapport* with Nature that what she gives them at different times of the year is what they like best. For instance, in winter, the pallid snowflake flowers of the Plum are the loved herald of the on-coming spring-time, when the petals and the snowflakes too will have fallen and finished. Spring, in other lands than Japan, gives us misty purples and pale mauves in her flowers, and if to this poetic people the fragile beauty of the Iris, the delicate, drooping grace of the Wistaria, appeal more than the flaming glory of their Azaleas, it is only, perhaps, because the wistfulness of the charm of these flowers suits their character and climate, and is more in sympathy with their ideas. Certainly, in the autumn, their worship of colour equals that of any nation, if it does not surpass it ; but the season is then with them in this. The sparkle of frost is in the wind, the blood runs faster, the sun shines ; and Nature, in air, landscape, and man, bounds and glows in harmony. India with

her splendid sunshine never gave more lavish colour than this sweet, misty land of grey skies, suddenly glowing with radiant sunlight, furnishes in her many-hued Chrysanthemums; nor can any dyes compare with the red blood that courses then through the Maples, and turns their tiny starry leaves to crimson and flame-colour and scarlet.

Perhaps it should be added that the Japanese sense of the appropriateness of colour is keener than ours. Their babies are ambient bunches of flowers, toddling butterflies; but the reds and rose-colours are for the girls, the blues and golden browns for the boys (bright enough they are, however, for the most gay-minded male!). Such horror as was always aroused in the hearts of the shopkeepers when I wanted a maple-hued kimono for my brown-eyed little son, and a pink peony-ed one for my rose-cheeked smaller boy! They could only recommend such shades for girls. At seven the masculine dress becomes duller, and at twelve the feminine one, and by the time a girl is married she wears the most discreet greys, and demure, dull blues and mauves imaginable. A dear little Japanese friend, who made me a present of a lovely piece of crêpe of mauve and scarlet when I was in my twenties, tactfully excused herself for this insult to my honourable years by explaining that European ladies can wear colours which only young geisha girls wear in Japan. To

each his season and colour: so to childhood and autumn the gay hues, to spring and adolescence the pale ones, to winter and old age the dark and sombre ones.

While it is an axiom that four-fifths of the trees in the garden must be evergreen, it would be wrong to suppose that all this vegetation is kept to that sombre note. That the relief of flowers and of colour is sought and intended is seen by the fact that hardly a garden in the country has not its Plum or Cherry tree, its Irises, thin-petalled as if made of tissue paper or of fine soft silk, its pots of Peonies, or Asters, or Morning Glories, or sweet-scented splendid Lilies, or its little Maples to warm it in the fall. Also, among the evergreen trees are included many flowering trees and Camellias, whose waxy blooms come to cheer December and January, and various golden-stemmed Bamboos, that give a warm note of colour even in the snow. Evergreens, in groups, are set near the living-room windows, so that a continued sense of life and greenness may be seen from them throughout the changes of the four seasons. Deciduous trees, always excepting Plum and Cherry, and perhaps, occasionally, Maple, are not usually put very close to the house, because of the litter their falling leaves make in the autumn (for the Japanese are tidy garden keepers), and because dead leaves there bring a sense of desolation. But, with the nice weigh-

ing of advantages against disadvantages, those mentioned, because of their beauty in the cheerless early spring season, because of their fragrance, because of the sentiment and poetry they inspire, may be put close to the house, and it is even a particularly delicate attention to plant a Plum tree near the guest-room of houses big and rich enough to afford such a chamber.

Plum trees, however, are for rich and poor alike, and do not cost as much to keep as a dog or a cat, with us. Lafcadio Hearn has a pretty translation of a Japanese seventeen-syllable verse, called 'Happy Poverty,' which runs—

“Wafted into my room the scent of the flowers of the  
Plum tree  
Changes my broken window into a source of delight.”

Trees which lose their leaves in the autumn are usually planted in a group with evergreens, because they not only display better the flowers in the blooming-time, but also conceal the bare branches and continue the effect of green in the winter. Indeed, that is the secret of green gardens,—the colour which, according to Chinese ideas, signifies life is always in itself beautiful and worthy of admiration, and at the same time it venerates age, and brings out the tender freshness of youth. It may typify the continuance of life, even though death and change may appear with it.

Flower-beds in hideous geometrical designs—anchors, hearts, and crescents—or patterned ‘carpet’ effects, such as we see in the West, even ‘herbaceous borders’ of a hundred swearing shades, are quite unknown in Japan. What nearest approaches garden-beds are the masses of Chrysanthemums in the grounds of some palaces, in the open space facing the ladies’ chamber, as in the Koma-Chi-Ma, Tsubone-Veya, and in the grounds of the Imperial Palace at Akasake.

Maples are usually placed at some distance from the house, or, as in the case of Plum, interspersed with evergreens and Laurels, as their bold beauty needs distance and atmosphere to enhance it. But those little star-shaped leaves, ‘the shape of a baby’s hand,’ are so admired for themselves that they are often seen set beside stone lanterns (as in the Ashinoyu garden, facing page 156), with a slender branch obscuring the light, and to make a pattern upon it in silhouette, when the lamp is lit at night.

I think it is because the Japanese shrink from the idea of death in their gardens, quite as much as it is that they dislike the litter of fallen leaves, the untidiness of fading stalk and petal, that they do not often introduce floral annuals into their gardens, except in pots. Indeed, one reason why it can be said that more than half the gardens in Japan are green gardens



is because, except for the flowering trees and shrubs already mentioned, the Lotus in the pond, the Irises beside it, and the Wistaria on the trellis which overhangs it, most of the flowers seen in them are in pots. Azaleas, of course, there are in plenty, but they are trimmed and cut, perhaps at the very moment of flowering, and they are grown for their greenness as much as for their blooms. These clipped shrubs are used in little gardens, to suggest hills, but, to my mind, look more like green puff-balls, generally. Examples of clipped Azaleas can be seen in the accompanying pictures. Chrysanthemums, Asters, Peonies, Lilies, Morning Glories, as well as other flowers which have been introduced from foreign countries, are all brought out in the prettiest of pots,—in blue and white, clean and fresh, or in cool pale green ones, delicious in colour.

It will be seen from the pictures—of Peonies (facing page 234), of Chrysanthemums (facing page 266), and even of specimen Irises (facing this page)—that the plants appear to have been set out as if at a flower show. The Chrysanthemums were in a tea-house garden, and had light bamboo sheds or screens over them, to protect them from the rain that might come and spoil their fluffy, curled locks. The Peonies—that is, the small variety—are never grown in the ground, although the tree sorts seen in the same picture always are. Irises are usually found in any gardens,











big or small, growing in a group beside the well or water-basin, or on the banks of a lake or stream, with their feet dabbling in the water; but the very finest are grown in pots and tended like babies. These<sup>1</sup> (in the picture) were cultivated by an old priest, who took no end of trouble in helping the artist in grouping and arranging them. His old wife posed as the 'life' of the picture, and how delighted was the husband when Mr. Tyndale, dissatisfied with the withered face among the fresh flowers, while still preserving the likeness, changed her into the pretty, wide-eyed mousmé who now peeps out from the flowers.

"Aha!" the ancient Darby said, chuckling, "you have given me a pretty young wife! Very good! Very good!" He felt that he was a fine figure of a man, after all!

Of green pictures, painted at the moment when they are not green, there are many in this book, but of those whose intention it was to suggest repose and peace, undisturbed by the mental uplift of brighter colour, there are only two—that of a Buddhist temple garden at Kofu (page 126), and that of the Kuridani Temple at Kyoto (facing page 136). Nami-Kawa San's green garden at Kyoto (facing page 160), and the rock garden at Nikko (facing page 284), although

<sup>1</sup> *Iris Kaempferi*. Some of the blooms were nearly a foot across. The colour, too, was a triumph of the grower, as a true pink is most difficult of attainment, the flowers inclining always to mauves.



green, are more properly classed with water and rock gardens.

But all the gardens are green sometimes, just as Nature is, and they linger in the memory constantly verdant and fresh, joyous with the spring and soothing with the summer, never sad with autumn, and steadfast with the winter.

## CHAPTER XI

### WATER GARDENS AND DRIED-UP WATER SCENERY

" In the chill stillness of the first spring days,  
A double beauty does my garden take.  
What mystic paths, what purple wealth of bloom,  
That fairy garden shows there in the lake.

Above the water long Wistaria sprays  
Lean down and look upon their pictured grace.  
Or is it that, below there, dim and cool,  
Another Fuji flower lifts up her face ? "

IF the description 'Water Gardens' included all those in which water—in appearance or reality—was a conspicuous feature, quite half the gardens in Japan would have to be classified in this way. To again employ my old but useful simile, the rocks and stones are the bones of the skeleton, the contour of the land represents its features, the flowers and trees are the flesh and the adornments of dress, but the water is the garden's life and soul.

No one knows better than the Japanese landscape artist what compound interest in beauty he reaps by the repetition and reflection of his earthy garden in his watery one. Just

as mirrors enlarge little rooms, as the sea beneath a sunset intensifies the glory of the western sky, so water in a garden doubles the interest, the beauty, and the apparent size of the place in which it is put. But, more than all, it makes a point on which the idea of the composition rests, forms a road for the mind and the imagination to travel by, beyond the little enclosure into mystic realms.

Japan is not a hot country, except on the coast during the months of July and August, but, nevertheless, the idea everywhere prevails that a garden must look, even if it is not, cool. Running water, then, or rather moving water, suggests coolness, but not coldness. In the depths of winter, when the rest of the world is hushed in white, deathlike sleep, the water pulses still with life. If a little lake is the garden's heart it must be one whose source can be seen, whether a stream, a cascade, or a spring; for 'dead water,' as they call any without a visible supply or motion, is both practically and æsthetically taboo.

It is remarkable, indeed, how much common sense enters into all Japanese artistic and ethical ideas. The notions at which foreigners are at first inclined to laugh, as 'superstitions,' if analysed are almost always found to have had their origin in cold, hard reason. So the objection to deep pools, to gloomy, mud-bottomed ponds, to stagnant waters which may harbour

weeds and mosquitoes, is too sensible to require either comment or commendation. Even the moats and temple lakes, where the beautiful Lotus flowers grow, have their constant, if slow, intake and outlet of water. I do not claim that there are no stagnant pools in Japan, where gnats and mosquitoes can pester the passer-by (or the artist who wishes to paint them), but these places are not arranged according to accepted gardening rules, and cannot even be cited as exceptions. Clear, shallow, moving water, which can sparkle while it reflects, is the essential idea; for it suggests happiness and serenity, the gaiety of Nature as well as its tranquillity.

Another dictum regarding water, which it is hard to consider anything but a superstition however, is the idea that it must enter the garden from the East and leave it by the West, no matter how difficult of arrangement this may be. Of course this is but the world-wide belief in the doctrine of not going against the sun. I suppose the conservative Briton, who would be horrified if the port were sent round 'the wrong way,' would refuse to recognize this custom as a survival of that idea, but it can be nothing else. The North, justly enough, is considered a malign influence, as the cold winds and storms come from that quarter, so that if water must, perforce, enter from that side of the grounds, its course is first carefully trained towards the East (round a sheltering hill, or group of trees,

if possible), and then it may go South, and out by the West. I cannot remember ever to have seen a current which ran through a garden entirely from North to South, with no East to West in it, and I feel sure that it is for a deeper reason than because, as the Chinaman would say, it 'B'long bad joss'! Nature herself must have indicated to the more deeply sensitive artist minds of the first garden makers that such was her way of doing things; but, until we can get at that mysterious meaning, we must continue to think this a survival of the ancient belief of primitive peoples in the occult influence of the unseen spirits of direction.

As the bite of Alice's wonderful mushroom can make her fit into big places or little ones, as she likes, so the Japanese can make the waters of his garden represent anything from a tiny pond for goldfish up to a view (in reduced scale) of the China Sea. There is a *naïveté* in the latter presentment that reminds one of the houses and castles and forts which as a child one used to make of sand, with lines of sea-shells on the beach—although I am bound to say that the Japanese play-places are more convincing than ours ever were to the grown-up imagination.

This China Sea presentation is not the choppy, sea-sick thing which the poor mortals who have had to cross the real sea remember with horror ;

but a charming image taken from Chinese mythological lore, with three Elysian Isles, and ever tranquil waters on which the passenger is not troubled, and the little basin is at rest. Although the gardener does not go so far in verisimilitude as to flavour the water with salt, or strew seaweed on the beach, there are certain fixed rules for sea-water scenery that must not be broken. No river or lake plants must grow on its edges, or fresh-water Reeds or Lotus flowers spring from its waves, no bridges (which are for smaller, fresh-water scenes) must reach from the mainland to its islands, and the sand and shells of its beach, and its regulation stones, must have the look and savour of the ocean about them.

Another favourite classical model, according to Mr. Conder, "is the extensive lagoon of the Che Kiang, in China—called Seiko by the Japanese—and remarkable for its wealth of Lotus flowers." He says that it is invariably represented in temple grounds; by which, I think, he means that it is not seen in private gardens, being considered inappropriate to any but a large representation.

In sea views it is not necessary to show the source and outlet of the water, as is insisted on in fresh-water scenery, for the obvious reason that it is not seen in the original model. In fresh-water scenery, if the source of the water is artificial it is brought into the picture with



every aid to make it natural-looking, and the outflow, or the pretence of it, is also made an attractive feature. The drains proper are, of course, never unduly visible, but are skilfully arranged to carry off the surface and rain water, without allowing it to mix with the ornamental sort, and so contaminate it.

Fountains and artificial ponds of architectural and geometrical designs, such as the European loves so dearly, are never seen in strictly Japanese gardens. Such set designs are for the highly artificial grounds of a landscape architect, not for those whose only true guide is Nature. There are, it is true, certain patterns set, such as circles, crescents, and squares (seen only in the tiniest of models), but their names indicate but roughly their shapes, for the edges are not outlined with stone copings, as ours are, and are broken and 'lost' at irregular intervals by plantings of Reeds, Irises, or shrubbery. Two pretty models are those of the ideographs of 'water' and 'heart'; and, although these graceful and free designs of Chinese characters would seem to require no groups of trees and flowering bushes to make them appear the spontaneous work of Nature's hand, they nevertheless have them.

This 'breaking the line' of a design is found in every phase of the landscape artist's method, and does more than anything else to give the fresh look of unspoiled and untouched Nature

to his work. The hard stone of the lantern is softened by the spray of Maple or Plum tree that brushes across it; the fences' openings, by the fine continuous needles of the Pine trees behind; while the rigid lines of the solid wooden bridges are lost, on one side, in a group of Azalea bushes, and the cascade, falling partly behind a swaying creeper or an overhanging tree, is given an added grace.

Another advantage this method has is that, by making appeal to the imagination, instead of leaving everything to the matter-of-fact and calculating eye, it adds to the apparent size of the object that is partly concealed. How can even the most conscientious sight-seer jot down in his notebook the information that such and such a waterfall is so many feet in height, if its top is lost in leafy mystery, and if it is broken near the bottom by scarlet branches of Maple? And no one can insist on the exact (and dwarfed) dimensions of an irregular lake, whose silvery waters are concealed, here by a group of trees and shrubs, there by a hillock, and on whose placid bosom there is yet a place for Lotus flowers to bloom.

There are many varieties of water gardens, and, after those of lake scenery the cascade kind appears to be the most popular,—indeed, in the central part of Japan, where there are so many natural springs and falls, they seem more frequent than any other. Of course they are by

no means all found ready-made to the gardener's hand, although so spontaneous do the artificial ones seem that it is difficult to think them the products of art. I remember a dear little garden of this kind on the road to Lake Biwa. The stones had all been carefully arranged, with a big 'Immovable' or 'Guardian' stone at the base, and its companion stone, lower, smaller, and rounder (supposedly of the feminine persuasion), lying gracefully on the ground at its feet. It all made, with some clipped *Azalea* bushes that bloomed in the very mouth of the shears, a charming group. Higher up the tender young green of a Maple stretched its pretty hands out, as if to wash them in the falling water, and 'broke' (in appearance, not in reality) the fine thread of the fall. A little shrine, set in a bower of small *Cryptomeria* trees at the top, not only offered an object for the climb, but made our scramble up the precipitous paths a dutiful pilgrimage.

Another cascade garden (there are a dozen or more in the same village)—which was so quaint and pretty that sketching it almost made us lose our tram at Yumoto, and hence our train to Yokohama—is on the Hata Pass, the road to Hakone Lake. It is in the back yard of a tea-house which our coolies insisted on our patronizing, instead of the one next door, which outwardly, and with its smiling and bowing *nésans* and *okkasan*, looked just like it. The flat part of the

garden *was* large enough to dry my husband's handkerchief in, for he tried it (he uses it as coolies do their towels on a tramp), but the hillside, which was the main part of the garden, could hardly have been covered by a tablecloth of moderate dimensions. Not that it looked tiny. No, I forbade the children to explore up the cascade path for fear they would get lost, or out of earshot! Great pains had been taken here to have for each season some change in the little garden's greenness, by the introduction of flowers. The first time I saw it, crimson Azaleas clambered and smouldered in the crevices of the rocks, and some delicate Irises, demure but conscious of their beauty, looked shyly at themselves in the pool's mirror at the foot of the waterfall. In summer some splendid *Lilium auratum*, gold-banded and bronze-freckled, reigned supreme. Another time the royal-blue of Monkshood, and silver grasses, were there. Last of all, after the red fire of Nerine, the wild 'Death Lily' of the rice-fields, had burned down, the embers had seemed to set the autumn Maples alight; and already there could be seen the reddening berries of the Nandana, the swelling buds of the early Plum tree, getting ready to cheer these simple peasant owners in the winter.

Although there are such fine natural falls all over Japan, the best classical models come from elaborate gardens in the south of China, called

by the Japanese *Rozan*, which must have a high hillock near, called *Rinmon*. Mr. Conder also tells us that, in temple grounds, a famous place in the Himalayas furnishes a design for a combination of water and hill scenery. It is known in Buddhist history for its cataract lake, and 'four rivers issuing therefrom.' In all these there is much poetical allusion which makes it very enthralling to the well-read Japanese, but in which the garden- and poetry-lover from the West cannot find even an academic interest. The foreigner usually likes far better the representations of the 'Six Gem Rivers of Japan,' with their stone-filled baskets strengthening the banks, and their waters hurling themselves headlong among the rocks of their bed—true miniature models of the dashing rivers of the country.

If, as is sometimes the case, no spring, no stream is available for the grounds, then the ghost of one is brought in to haunt the place, and the dry bones of the watercourse suggest the presence of the loved spirit. This 'Dried-up Water Scenery,' as it is called, deceives even the unimaginative Briton, the down-right American, who do not intend to be trifled with. They are beguiled by this mysterious art of water suggestion. They say, sympathetically: "Pity you haven't more rain, this time of year, to fill your brook." Or, "Jolly fine cascade that must be in the rainy season; I suppose



you have lots of water here some time of the year ! ”

The idea is simple in the carrying out, though subtle in theory. The bed of a lake is hollowed out,—not too deep, for that would upset the *vraisemblance* of the scheme, as, if it were not shallow, how did the water dry up so early in the season ? Sand and pebbles form the edges, and big boulders jut up as rocky islands might, while overhanging shrubs try in vain to look at themselves in what should be the mirror below. Irises and water grasses make a pretty group, with some low, dark rocks, and a stone lantern in another nook, as if the water had just receded from their feet, and the illusion is complete.

Or, perhaps, it is a cascade's spirit which is to be lured to the place. Just as on All Souls' Day, the Japanese *Bon*, or 'Festival of the Dead,' spirits are evoked by gifts, and their blessing and presence asked for by getting a habitation, food and clothing ready for them, so, by making a bed for a brook, a series of leaping-stones for a waterfall, the spirit sought for comes. I do not say that the reality comes in the case of either the water or the Souls of the Dead, but the comforting assurance of them to the imaginative person—even to those not Japanese—most certainly does. I have more than once felt sure that I heard the tiny trickling noise of water dripping down between the rocks,



when it was nothing but a little wind toy fluttering tags of metal and hung somewhere in the trees, which, added to the belief that there ought to be water somewhere about, deceived me.

These imitations of dry-water scenery are not, as one might think, meretricious stage effects that need something more than even an Elizabethan imagination to make them real. Japan, although, I am sure, blessed with more streams and springs, rivers and pools than any other country of her size in the world, yet abounds in natural dried-up scenery also. The artist goes to Nature to study his subject, and carries out his picture as thoroughly as though danger might ensue from the fluid of his mind if all care were not taken properly to embed the rocks, and to disperse the stones about, in the design that is to suggest his water. Even bridges, of wood or of stone, cross this dry bed of the lake to the islands, or are thrown over—as the children call it—the ‘pretending’ stream. Sometimes blackened stones are laid in the centre. When these are smooth, and reflect the light, the resemblance to water is very striking. But this is an unworthy trick, and is not considered good art; for it succeeds by deception, not by a justifiable appeal to the imagination.

If in flat enclosures, such as tea-gardens, no water or indication of water is seen, then more









emphasis is laid on the well and the water-basin, and they, as the newspapers and the theatrical slang of America would put it, are 'featured.' But in practically every garden this idea of the life-giving element must be found.

Among the pictures in this book several water gardens are shown. The little gem of a miniature lake view facing this page we discovered in a garden at Ashinoyu, up in the sulphurous hills above Miyanoshita. I had dragged our artist and another painter friend up there, to do a garden with which I had fallen in love shortly before, when taking sulphur baths at the daintiest of private houses in the village. On finding the house let to a Japanese admiral, and therefore inaccessible, we had to justify our tramp in some way. The whole population of the village interested themselves in our quest, as is the friendly Japanese habit, and they let us investigate every garden whose gates we liked the look of, until, in a hopeless embarrassment of riches, we settled on this one. The water which fed the pond came bubbling from a spring in the centre, but a tiny trickle of a waterfall helped too—dripping from the rocks below the lantern. There was a great group of Lilies, which were no longer in flower, and it was certainly not their fragrance that lingered there still, for this little lake of Paradise smelled like the infernal regions. However, the goldfish did not seem to mind it, but flashed



a deeper bronze and red-gold in the yellow, sulphur-tinged fluid. We spent many happy days sketching there, and grew so used to the Ashinoyu smell, and the soft feel of the water in the constant washings of hands and face which we pretended we had to undergo (it leaves the skin beautifully soft, as if made of velvet), that we quite missed the fumes of sulphur when we went back to Hakone.

The picture of the water garden at Nikko (facing page 50), with the little *Kwannon* figure carved in the stone, although in a private garden, is a typical bit of the scenery of temple grounds. And the Hydrangeas in the tea-garden at Kyoto (page 182), the Lotuses in the public gardens (page 222) and in the moat at Kofu (page 116), all give different phases of the use of water in landscape gardening in Japan. But the view which best represents the most complete type of water gardening is that of Nami-Kawa San's garden, facing this page. The sense of space given by islands, rocks, and arching bridges, and of distance, secured by careful tree-planting, is well shown. Although I know the place intimately, and am aware that contented artist-craftsmen are at work on their cloisonné, in the rooms whose *shoji* are hidden by the trees in the background, I can hardly convince myself that the clear moving water and the overhanging trees do not go back a mile or so. A lovely place this was, exemplifying some of the best

features of the landscape artist's work, and yet it was the outlook of a 'factory'!

The proprietor, a dignified yet simple elderly man, greeted us with deep bows of welcome at the door on a pouring wet day, and thanked us for taking off our shoes before venturing on his spotless amber-coloured mats,—so many foreigners did not, he said, and the Japanese are too polite to insist upon a courtesy that with themselves goes without saying. He led us through many rooms, and along covered passage-ways, all of which looked upon the cool waters of the court, until we came to the workrooms. We saw the *cloisonné*, from its designing in Chinese ink on rice paper, to the final stone-polishing stage which may take a year to do, and everywhere was that tranquil spirit of the garden, no haste and no slackness, steady and ever moving. Happy in their daily toil, these artists create their beautiful works with love, and the result is something of deeper value and more permanence of beauty than a thousand machine-made things of the same sort could have. One man had a little vase with two Irises in it on the floor in front of him, and sometimes, as he fitted the tiny copper wires of the buckle he was making (some day to adorn the trim waist of a tourist, I suppose), he would lift his eyes to the flowers, or turn them for a moment to look at the cool moving waters outside.

These things are of the spirit ; and what brings peace to the soul, serenity to the daily task, joy to labour, however justified it may be by improved results in the fruits of that work, needs no justification, for itself is of more value.











## CHAPTER XII

### MINIATURE GARDENS

" Oh ! Master Workman, labouring cunningly,  
Which proves thy genius more,  
Thy big works or thy small ?  
The temple Pine, that towers straight and tall,  
Or fragile-fashioned seaweed strewn upon the shore ?  
I am content with Fuji, formed of rose and snow.  
But are the curves less perfect that this shell doth show ? "

**I**F the laws of landscape gardening, in big and extensive grounds, are as rigorous and inflexible as those of Nature, they are no less so in the miniature gardens which are small enough to set on a tea-tray. The makers call them *Hachi Niwa*, or 'Dish Gardens.'

The Japanese artist never scamps his work. His detail is the most perfect in the world. Plodding, infinitely patient China cannot surpass him, or even equal him. The Nippon carvings have a finesse added to the original upburst of inspiration, that comes only from loving labour. The Chinaman works because he has always worked, not from second nature, but from centuries of nature. His subconscious mind

alone is employed, and the upper fields of consciousness (if he has any, and I doubt it, in the case of these workpeople — artisans, not artists) are off somewhere else. For him is not the vision ; the patient, painstaking toil is for pay ; small as the object in ivory which he is carving. The Japanese, on the other hand, works joyously ; the tiny figure throbs with arrested movement. No Noah's Ark models for him, but sinuous, sleek bodies, rough, hairy monsters, microscopically perfect ; not for him China's fat, licentious gods, mandarins of nodding heads with human hair inserted for beards ; but his Buddhas are mysterious in repose, his animals seem to snarl with life, his old men to stagger under their loads, his wrestlers to tussle with bone and sinew beneath the flesh, his rats to crawl, and his snakes to coil shudderingly. Now I must not be understood as admiring all this, because the most perfect ivory and porcelain figures seldom appeal to me ; a carved *netsuké* used by a Japanese as a knob, as he intends it, not as a senseless ornament on a shelf in a cabinet, does.

In painting, this exquisiteness of detail is, as one might say, only in spots, to give the necessary relief to the freedom and boldness of the body of the design. But this restraint from the 'touch too much' is, to my mind, the greatest art of all. Then comes the appeal to the imagination, which carries the thoughtful

observer far beyond the point to which the most adept fingers can reach.

This again is the secret of the charm of Japanese poetry. In three lines, or in five, a beautiful image can be evoked, a haunting, elusive idea can be expressed which leaves one with thoughts for a whole day, and which, in double the space, cannot be adequately translated. Finesse is saved always from preciousness by suggestion.

In other arts it is the same. China fails in inspiration, although she inspired Japan. Her own artists, in the days of the Ming Dynasty, exhausted it. Where the designs and the shapes, the colours and the decorations of porcelains, bronzes, and sounding brass (for how truly rings the metal of those days!) are not imitated, the work is feeble, stiff, and uninspired. And naturally in imitation the original impulse is lacking, and the craft itself is of an inferior kind. Japan, on the contrary,—where she is not warped and spoilt in her artistic feelings by the influence of Western nations,—turns out, every day, and in every part of her land, works not to be despised by the prophets of art, not unworthy to be placed beside the classic models. Her modern ceramics compare, in all that is good, with those of the early makers. Her brocades and embroideries (when manufactured for her own people, not for the cheap and barbarian tastes of foreign tourists) vie, in

richness and splendour, with those made in the sumptuous days of the Ashikawa Regents. Aniline dyes and 'Maypole Soaps' are not for the Japanese, and even in these days the depth and delicacy of vegetable pigments for colouring silks and crêpes have not yet depreciated to that level.

But most of all in colour printing, in pictorial art, Japan has maintained the high excellence of her past standards. I am aware that most people will dispute this statement, and I am a little frightened when I make it, remembering the tons of meretricious pictures sold to my country people and others in the Treaty Ports, and abound to testify to the contrary. Oh, the glaring Fujis, the awful moonlight scenes, the crude and—happily—impossible sunsets behind inky-edged sail-boats, the dreadful, grinning geishas, which are sold by the thousand, to prove Japan's poverty of purse and the wandering foreigners' of taste! I quail when I look back on my former statement. But again, when I recollect the shops, obscure and small, in Tokio and Kyoto, where one can buy nothing else but beautiful colour prints—so happy, so inspired in design, that a handful picked up at random would mean half a dozen real treasures, to be examined at leisure later, I am reassured. For a few *sen* each one can buy little prints that no artist would scorn to own to-day, and that no layman would dare to scorn to-morrow.

All this is a preamble to the statement that, except where the debasing art standards of the West has affected them (for it is the poor and pernicious, not the best foreign works that they see), the landscape artists have continued in the fair, firm paths of the past, and *Hachi Niwa* are good reproductions on a small scale of the best gardens.

The idea of these miniature models of scenery came, of course, from China. I could not but be struck, only the other day, when I saw into what degenerate lines the art had fallen, in Chinese hands, compared with the examples I had known in Japan. The makers, in this case, were native watch-keepers at the lighthouses which Himself had asked me to go with him to inspect. The Trinity House man in charge, an unusually clever and intelligent Englishman, encouraged his native staff to fads of the sort, to keep them out of mischief when they were off duty. There were, perhaps, half a dozen of these toy models of mountainous scenery shown me, and some were still in course of construction, while yet others had been shipped home. Big lumps of coral rock, worn by the action of the sea into natural hills, valleys, and caves formed the basis of them, and, after a promising piece had been chosen, a jack-knife helped on the good work, until a mountain, cleft by a ravine arched with bridges, appeared. Then the little heights were crowned with porcelain models of



pagodas, shrines, and tiny houses, securely cemented in, while porcelain people wandered everywhere, in defiance of all Chinese laws, in the neighbourhood of toy tigers. It seemed as if the gallant artists would prove that there, at any rate, their people were brave and valorous. Sometimes, my informant said, they planted grass and little ferns and sprigs of trees about, and brought up a microscopic rill of water to form a cascade or a lake, but the models I saw had no such fancy touches, and, except for the gay colours of the porcelain accessories, all was of the hue of putty—the natural shade of the coral rock.

From this primitive type which has not advanced in China the Japanese have evolved their exquisite art.

The Japanese *Hachi Niwa*, even of the commonest sort, which may be sold for a sum smaller than itself at a fair, is, however, a far better specimen of landscape gardening in a tea-plate than this. Others are veritable gems of art of their kind, and are expensive out of all proportion to their size. Some of these are most artistic, though I confess I have never had the passion for them which many foreigners evince, and I cannot understand how dignified statesmen and men of letters in Japan can take such an interest in them. It is said that the great artist Hiroshige so loved this diminutive art that he went to the trouble of designing a book

of his famous fifty-three views of the Tokkaido (the road from Kyoto to Yedo), in which the stages of the journey are arranged to serve as models of *Hachi Niwa*. I have never seen this book, but am the happy possessor of one of the rare old copies of the original colour prints, and can easily understand that these could act as ground-plans for the miniature scenes, as they have for the decoration of dessert plates and after-dinner coffee cups and saucers.

Little as one might think it, the laws are adamant that go to the making of these pretty ornaments. Indeed, to understand thoroughly all the principles of *Hachi Niwa* would imply a fair education as a landscape artist. The inevitable and never-to-be-transgressed rule of just proportion is the foundation, and the very dish itself must correspond to the dimensions of the scene it contains ; or perhaps one should say, the design must conform to the size of the shallow mottled-blue high-edged plate in which it is to be set. There are many shapes and sizes of these, some oval, some round, some square or square-cornered, and some oblong, but generally they are of the last shape, and usually from twelve to eighteen inches long by eight to twelve inches wide. But the designs are by no means bound to these dimensions ; some are literally only big enough to go into a tea-plate, and are none the less beautifully made, in spite of it.

There are even more scenes suitable to depict in miniature, in these dishes, than there is variety in the dishes themselves, for the artist can choose from the whole field of Nature. Land and sea, hill and woodland, rocky isles and grassy slopes he can reconstruct in little, or he can represent historic temples, spots famous in history or mythology, or scenes celebrated in poetry and literature.

They are not merely toys for children, but their construction is considered a real art, and rightly; for is not the baldest labour, if sincerely and lovingly performed, raised to the status of an art?

Competitions of *Hachi Niwa* are yearly held in Kyoto and occasionally in Tokio, and are attended by the highest nobles and statesmen and connoisseurs of art in the land. Foreigners laugh at this, as another example of the puerility of the Japanese mind. It strikes me as suggesting exactly the opposite. Did hot baths in the winter camps in Manchuria imply effeminacy, or lack of courage and strategic ability, in the Japanese soldier? Did the sailors who sent home *Tanka* ('short poems'), written in leisure moments during the blockade of Port Arthur, go down in their ships any the less courageously, gloriously, because they were poets at heart?

Years ago, on my first visit to Japan, in a little fishing village where in great contentment

we were spending the summer, Young America, aged two and a half, whom nothing escaped, called my attention to a shop where an old man sold tiny porcelain images. I say sold, but, in the small boy's case, it must have been rather given away, for the short supply of coppers he was possessed of could not possibly have been enough to buy all the temples, torii, junks, coolies, priests, Fuji-sans, and bridges the little rascal had in his possession. However, a Japanese gift is a gift, and may not be paid for, except by the presentation of another gift; so, in getting the matter properly arranged, we became great friends with the wrinkled old pair who kept the shop, and later, through them, with a young man, a son I think, who made *Hachi Niwa*. I do not remember that these were for sale; I imagine they cannot have been, for I never owned one, and the child's was a present; but many a pleasant hour did we spend watching their manufacture, and marvelling at the silent youth's delicacy and dexterity of hand.

A whole little set of tools he had, and models of many of them he gave the small boy with which to learn to make miniature gardens on his own account. The baby brooms (a few inches long they were), and a little trowel, also a toy, were the only things that lasted long, but the gardener himself had others—a squirting watering-pot for keeping damp the moss (which simulated

grass); a funny little flat-iron for smoothing sand, and a sieve for sifting it. There were also the inevitable chop-sticks, to be used as tweezers or for picking up things, a dear little rake, like bird's claws of bamboo, for marking the sand in patterns, as well as many scraps of the same material to be used as props and architectural aids.

It was like seeing the real making of a garden, to watch the evolution of this miniature thing from a pile of earth and little stones and various coloured sands; from moss, and the tiniest of dwarf trees (so small that it seemed like kittens having kittens to see them covered with flowers and fruit), into veritable little landscape gardens.

First the mountains would be built up; and they, as well as their little houses, were founded on a rock—indeed, on many rocks. Then, half-way through this task, the stones for the cascade would be inset, carefully, firmly, so that no shaking, no torrents of sand could dislodge them; and then more earth, hard-packed, unyielding as in Nature, before the trees, the houses, temples, bridges, or the mossy grass were put in place. It was all so deftly, yet so securely, welded together, that one felt a Lilliputian, and not afraid to climb the hills and to venture on the sandy lake, or to explore the beach, the caves, and the rocky, Pine-clad islands.













Then, last of all, with great shouts of glee from Young America, the little porcelain models from his warm, chubby hands would be put into the picture. His own coolie, with a carrying pole and basket, would be crossing a larger image of his own bridge, and his own little red torii would be set up, to indicate the path to the Shinto temple on the hill. At that point the swarms of Japanese children who were helping us look on, and blocking out the light from the narrow street, would caper and shout too. It was serious business with the serious young man, but we were all thrilled children together.

A grown-up friend, a highly educated Japanese, told me afterwards that there were all kinds of delicacies of the art which this primitive workman knew not of; that to know the different sorts of sand to use, alone, was a science in itself, and required a thorough knowledge of the geography of Japan, and probably of China as well. For the different shades of colour are all indicated: a slaty grey for deep water, chips of granite for rapids, 'sallow sands' for beaches, lightish grey sands for shallow water, deep bluish sands for seas, and pure white sands for coaming breakers. Then there are the proper kinds of gravel and cobbles for river-beds and river beaches, and the right sort of rocks for islands and for seaside stones, as well as for 'Guardian Stones,' 'Cascade Stones,' and 'Step-

ping Stones.' From all over Japan the accredited varieties are gathered, and shipped to the makers of these little landscapes, and he commits an artistic crime who does not use the proper kinds in his composition. Then only careful and laborious cultivation and repression can grow the dwarf trees to plant in these gardens. It may take sixty years to attain the small Cherry trees that grace the temple scene, or thirty for the stunted Pines which adorn the rocky islet. No trouble is too great for the modeller in making these microscopic gardens as perfect as a full-sized one should be. Good artists plan them, and good artists make them, and good artists—the nation at large—criticize, admire, and love them when they are finished, and, what is more, take care of them, tend them, and value them as treasures for years afterwards.

So, even if I did not feel the same pleasure in these toy models of gardens that I did in the originals, I could not but admire and respect the careful and faithful work put into them, the labour that made the little as perfect in one way as the greater was in another, the fidelity to detail, the inspiration and breadth, the sincere and sound intention which turned a toy into a text-book, a pastime into a scientific pursuit.

## CHAPTER XIII

### SOME PARTICULAR GARDENS

“ 'Tis not my garden by real ownership,  
Nor yet because my genius made its Art,  
But, cherished by my love and tenderness,  
That place is mine which lives within my heart.”

BY the ownership of affection I am mistress of many gardens in Japan, and that kind of possession is ten points of the law. They are of varied sorts, these gardens of mine, and scattered over several provinces, and in the years I do not go to Japan in the flesh I visit them in the spirit, and enter my annual declaration of rights in them. They are not all magnificent show-places and great parks, such as, with the illimitable wealth of fancy, others might exclusively choose. Some are humble little plots of ground, the tiny back yards of flimsy wooden houses, whose torn paper windows (“the work of little fingers on the *shoji*”) open upon them. They are abloom only with gaily-clad children,—whose little noses invariably need wiping,—unless a wild flower or two adorns the miniature shrine, or a few Irises



(which are not alone for the rich) grow beside the well. Poor and mean, perhaps, you would think these gardens, but I love them for the joy of growing things which they bring into the drab lives of their real owners, for their aspirations more than for their achievements. They are as pathetic, as wistfully beautiful, as is a crushed flower in the street to the lame child who has picked it up and tenderly cherishes it.

The finest of my fancy-owned domains are the grounds of temples, for there stately dignity and grandeur are to be found if ever in Japan, as surroundings and architecture must agree in style. Kaibara Yekken, in his advice to women, says: "Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, being resorts for pleasure, should be sparingly visited before the age of forty." This adage might have kept me out, but I took to heart rather what he says in another book on the Philosophy of Pleasure (*Raku Kun*), which Mr. W. G. Aston translates thus: "If we open our hearts to the beauty of Heaven, Earth, and the Ten Thousand Created Things, they will yield us pleasure without limit."

One loves the quaint old churchyards of England, with their tangled grasses, their occasional flowers, their silence, and their peace, but the temple gardens of Japan are as far removed from such places as graves are. How carefully tended they are—it is their only fault!

No leaves are allowed to lie, no sticks or stones to encumber any spot the landscape artist has not marked for them. All is as of Nature, but of an enriched and elegant sort, exquisitely spontaneous. Kyoto has numbers of such places—to Japanese eyes no longer as well groomed as their makers planned; the clipping is not so frequent; the bloom of Azalea may be seen where the rounded close green alone should show; but, to Western ideas, they are not less lovely for the sweet *abandon* of their dress.

Kodaiji, designed by the great landscape artist, Koberi Enshu, to suggest, in little, the Garden of Paradise, is such a place, and all the year there is something to admire and love there. Two great Pines are appropriately guarding the gateway, wishing long life to the garden and all that enter there.

In China, the temple grounds on the arid hills are the only cool and green oases where trees are to be found. In Japan, where beautiful trees are seen everywhere, they seem even bigger and fairer in these religious retreats, and the Fir trees, in particular, the Pines, the Cryptomerias, and the Hemlocks, are very imposing.

A Cherry tree, just inside this garden, droops in spring with its delicate rosy blooms, and displays its beauty of flower and twigs and trunk against the conifer's deep green. Through another gate one may examine studiously the two charming lakes, the pretty islands (one the

'Crane,' one the 'Tortoise'), the wooden bridge, which is ingenuously named 'The Bridge of Heaven'; and, what I most delighted in, the 'Moon-gazing Platform,' which the great Hideyoshi had sat upon at Fushimi, whence it was brought to adorn this garden. Here are Irises, as Mr. Tyndale shows in the Buddhist temple gardens facing this and page 40; and Azaleas, whose blood-red bloom, just going off, was pale rose colour when I was there last, in June. There the Plum shows only one tree, but the Cherry takes its place. The October Maples are magnificent. The autumn, too, brings a wealth of Kiku flowers, for the old priest showed me many pots of Chrysanthemums, which he was tending and bringing on, with a spiny framework of bamboo training each spray, in just the same way as my gardener did at Hong-Kong.

The Choin-in Temple grounds, in Kyoto, are on a grander scale, and so the intimate loveliness of the smaller garden would not have been appropriate to it, although there are bits to cuddle to one's heart, as the accompanying picture shows. Murray says that it spreads over sixty acres. I must take his word for it, as figures mean nothing to my non-mathematical brain. I only know that, when we had climbed to the top of that interminable flight of stone steps, we were so breathless that we would have believed anything concerning its size and the height of the great hill which was levelled for









WALKING IN THE GARDEN IN TEMPLE GARDENS  
1890





the building of its temple. But, breathless or not, the place is awe-inspiring with the true sense of religion—though of an alien faith—in its great hall and its huge, heaven-reaching Pines.

The same thing one felt at Nikko, in the splendid temple grounds there, amid the finest *Cryptomerias* in the world, but we who were conscientious had little time to enjoy them, so hard at work were we kept examining the splendid details of the buildings they surround.

Gongen Temple, beside Lake Hakone, however, was a different matter. Every day, and sometimes twice a day, did we wander about its *Cryptomeria*-shaded paths, out to the end where the great trees grew smaller, and the golden light of the West empurpled the slim trunks silhouetted against it; and then on, through the *Hydrangea*-bordered track, to the 'corner' above the lake, where peerless Fuji, a dream mountain, an opalescent cone of colour and mist, seemed to float among the clouds.

Then also, in spite of an untoward adventure there, I must name the park-like grounds about the great Daibutsu at Kamakura. The monstrous bronze Buddha had not touched any of us, so 'tourist-y' it had seemed, until we had climbed up the dusty staircase and looked out of the little window at the back on to the green tops of the group of Cherry trees below. And then, suddenly, I had been transported back to my

old home in the South when, a light, slim child, I had climbed up through the close, scratchy branches of an old Hawthorn tree, until I lay as in a prickly cradle on the flowering top itself. Then I loved the big Buddha who had revived that feeling of Nirvana-like rest after the thorns and struggles of my climb, and I love him still, though a snake entered my Eden, the serpent into Paradise. Now, I am really afraid of only one thing on earth, and that is a snake, my loathing for which approaches idiocy. When a child, if I but touched the picture of a snake, in turning a page, I would run and wash my hands. So when, after my descent from the Buddha, still dreaming, I flung myself down in the flickering shadows on a grassy bank, a big fat snake glided away beside my hands, I shot up in the air with a shriek that must have resounded from the metal god, with horror. One of our party was an ex-naval officer who served in South America, where a reptile is first killed and then examined afterwards to see if it is of a safe or dangerous sort. So, while I still yelled, he dispatched the worm of Buddha with his stick. As every one knows, Buddhists are forbidden to take life of any sort, and, as my noise had attracted every priest and acolyte in the country to the spot, it looked as if we should have some complicated explanations to make. But human nature was stronger than faith, in these people, and the natural aversion

which the average man has from wiggly things made them palliate our crime. Indeed, they were so cordial and sympathetic that one might have thought they were secretly glad to be rid of the serpent, with the onus on another's conscience! They gave me tea and picture-books and post cards, as they might have done for a frightened child, and measured the cause of all the tumult—out of sight of the windows. It was just under four Japanese feet in length, which would be just over four of ours; and to this day my naval friend declares, in self-extenuation, that it was of a highly poisonous variety.

How many other temple gardens might I name, enshrined in my remembrance! Ishiyama, on Lake Biwa, where the great authoress of that quaint and charming romance, *Gengi Monogatari*, who is known to history as Murasaki no Shikibu, tired of Court life, is said to have retired for seclusion and peace; another little place of worship, in the village of Uraga, below Yokosuka, in the Bay of Tokio, which, like Gongen, had red Shinto torii for the gateway, but Buddhist ceremonial and priests; the temple garden on the hill above Nagasaki; the water that forms the garden of the great temple at Myagima, with its darkly lapping tide delicately starred with the reflections of a hundred lanterns, and North and South, East and West, others which I know and love.

Of tea-gardens there are as many more in

which I take a proprietary interest. They are inconsequent things, and catholic enough in style to meet the tastes of very varied patrons. Besides this, tea-gardens, more than any other sort, have affected and influenced the arrangements of other grounds. It will be remembered that Sen-no-Rikiu, Kabori Enshiu, and other great landscape artists were primarily masters of the tea ceremonies (*Cha-no-yu*). As they evolved and laid down laws for the one, they developed the other to correspond. The foundation of the art of tea-garden making is that of all the others—Nature! But where temple grounds can be serene, grand, imposing, or elegant, tea-gardens must be modelled on Nature's homelier moods—where with wildness there is also found comfort, with rusticity quiet and tender charm. Flowers there should be, and running water, and the life and gaiety of darting carp or goldfish, or of domesticated birds, and these one always finds.

My first experience of Japanese tea-gardens was at Nagasaki, and I have never forgotten that panting climb, on a perfect May morning, with the big paper fish swinging in the sky at the tops of the masts, the flutter of petals and the scent of the Azaleas and of dried fish in the air. And how distinct is the memory of the faint amber-hued tea, so delicate and refreshing, brought to us in the tiny, dainty bowls the Japanese use as teacups, by the brightest-faced and most bubbling of *nésans*; and I can



still taste the golden, rosy-touched loquats they peeled for us. And what a fuss they made over my fair-haired Young America, aged two and a half; how they felt his curls to see if they were real, got flowers and fruit and small cakes, and, finally, little toys, and a globe of goldfish for him to take away with him; and how the whole troupe of light-clad girls, giggling, full of glee, left all their other customers and escorted us down the whole length of those stone steps, and stood bowing and crying "*Sayonara*" and "Pliss come again," until we were out of sight. I confess that, on my next visit without the blond boy, they did not remember me, but I hold them in my heart in spite of their sweet perfidy; for the garden, with its trees, its roses, and its view of one of the loveliest harbours in the world, remains the same.

On the road to Mogi, too, there are a number of tea-house gardens which are landmarks in one of the happiest days I ever spent. June was in perfection,—and what is so rare as a day in June, if it is sunny and bright, in Japan! The red covers on the big settees under the trellis were laid to help one enjoy the Azaleas in full bloom, and the little table to which our tea was brought had an arrangement of white Irises in a flat, pale green dish, and the smallest of goldfish, like little orange butterflies, swam about, as if flying, in the clear water at their feet. If I had not the heart to ask them to take



away the hideous coarse white cloth with which the pretty silvery wood table was disfigured, it was because our hosts took such simple pleasure and pride in it, as the outward and visible sign of how *au fait* they were with foreign notions. But I would have Honourable Tea, instead of the dishonourable stuff from Ceylon—logwood-dyed, with tinned milk from Switzerland to put into it—which they evidently thought the foreigner ought to prefer.

A hundred other tea-house gardens one might name, each of some individual charm. Kyoto is perhaps richest in them. The illustration facing this page is fairly typical. The Hakone Pass has many attractive places; in Tokio—even in Yokohama and Kobe—there are so many pretty ones; and every mountain or hill that boasts a view has its little shelter, and tiny half-wild garden, where one can get tea, and cool and a fine prospect all at the same time. The only rule of the landscape artist's lore that these spots observe is that they must exhibit no artificiality, but resemble Nature as closely as possible. Some have just been made, but are already part of the road. On the way up the mountain at Miyagima (by the fine path whose nineteen hundred odd granite steps were the gift of Prince Ito a month or two before his sudden tragic end), we found such a place. Himself, who, as a sailor, prefers climbing rigging to a mountain,







HYDRANGEAS IN THE GARDEN  
BY H. H. H. 1900



and a good rest to either, declared when we were half-way up his intention of stopping at the next tea-house we came to. Made of warm, orange-toned new wood, we saw the gleam of it through the trees, but long before we reached it the old woman who owned the place, hearing a child's voice with ours, had run down to meet and greet us on our way. It was hard, with her excited Japanese and our very limited command of the language, to understand her, and my five-year-old boy was rather frightened when she wanted to carry him on her back up the rest of the way. But after a time we made out that she had a little shrine dedicated to Gisu, the god who is kind to children, and she wanted our boy to place some stones at his feet. She had lost her own son, and was a widow and childless, and this was all she could do to help his little soul in the land to which he had gone. The good Gisu—it is strange, the resemblance in sound and in character to our Name, (for there is no other)—would guard her child, if other living children showed him their love and devotion. Such a pathetic little garden it was, made under the shelter of a great overhanging rock, with rough stone lanterns beside the tiny shrine, and wild flowers and ferns, carefully tended, put where they might catch a hold in the sparse soil. Our little chap brought a cartload of small stones to build up before the altar, and put all the loose change



we had in the little wooden money-box as offerings, when we told him what the old woman hoped his act might do for her son. It was all we could do to keep her from carrying the child on her back up the remaining three miles to the top, so grateful was she. Indeed, I doubt if we could have dissuaded her if the laws of hospitality had not prevailed, Himself declaring his intention of awaiting our return at her little rest-house, and being in instant need of tea.

I wish I had the space—speaking of rest-houses—to describe the little garden on the bleak mountain-side of Fuji which I saw there when I made a memorable ascent years ago. The people who open these places are only allowed there for a few weeks in the summer, but, in spite of that, in the very cinders half-way up the old couple who gave out tea to pilgrims had managed to place some evergreen shrubs, had cultivated the white Fuji flower (*not* Wistaria) that grows in the ashes, and had some Reeds and grasses in a jar. In that desolation, as of death, there was life and greenness, and the joy in beauty.

Of private gardens it seems invidious to speak in particular, where, from rich and poor, I have been given of their best. One of the most splendid I have seen was at Uraga, a great park-like place, a hill garden, well watered, with cascade and brook and a little lake, trained

trees and dwarfed ones, stretches of grassy 'duck-land,' quaint bridges, pagodas and lanterns of mossy stone. Another hill garden in the same locality was a honey-land for bees, so rich and sweet was it with fragrant, many-hued Azaleas. Still another was in the outskirts of Tokio, the classical garden of a famous Japanese nobleman and statesman, who ended by building an ugly, modern, 'foreign' house in the grounds, and letting the place to an Englishman.

One humble garden that I loved was behind an old thatched house on the shores of Lake Hakone. When in summer all the *shoji* were set open, one saw, in the dark frame of the walls, the crimson masses of velvety Phlox against the silver-blue of the lake and the bluer hills beyond; and no doubt for the happy owners there was a sight of incomparable Fuji around the shoulder of the hill, which the house-walls hid from us others, outside the pale.

Of wild gardens, where all Japan's a garden, and all the men and women merely flowers, it is even a more hopeless task to begin to chronicle. But, thinking back over the years, the place of the kind which stands out most clearly in my memory is the *hara* between Chuzenji and Yumoto. The Great Gardener had planted as He willed, and the wide plain was one vast field of flowers. It was in late July, and yet so far up in the

mountains were we, that pale Irises, quaker-robed, still lingered, and held silent meetings in damp hollows, while Azaleas, bold in their colour and rich in their perfume, ran like fire over field, beside rocks, through the underbrush, and into edges of the woods—the most heart-arresting sight I ever saw. A paraphrase of the Japanese poet might put it—

“Above Chuzenji, like a field on fire,  
The wild Azalea's scarlet paints the plains.  
Or is it that the great gods fought and fell,  
And blood-red flowers sprang up from the stains?”

I take the same delight that a savage does in fiery, passionate colour, and would have dismounted, and simply wallowed in Azalea blooms, if Himself, who has an occult gift for scenting the neighbourhood of snakes, had not warned me to stick to my horse. As it was, it seemed as if every turn of the rocky, uncertain path we had taken up to the *hara* revealed a sinuous zigzag darkly gliding into the cliff-side, or over the edge opposite, which leapt down almost sheer into the raging cataract below. I hate a height, and as my poor old doddering horse backed towards the precipice every time that he was bitten by a fly, or that I screamed at the sight of a snake, I was rather too literally between the devil—the serpent—and the deep sea—the abyss.

Another *hara*, or ‘upland meadow land,’ in

which the flat plain is a great wild flower-bed, is at that lovely but missionary-ridden spot, Karuizawa. It has about the coolest climate in Japan, and reminded me, with its Maples, Ash trees, young Birches, and luxuriant grassy fields, of New England and Canada, while English friends kept exclaiming at its resemblance to the Highlands of Scotland. But my simile was the more accurate, as the botanists, Rein, Asa Gray, Sir Joseph Hooker, etc., have all been struck with the similarity of the vegetation of Japan in general to that of the Atlantic slope of North America, and of the flora of these *hara* regions in particular to that of the United States. I was indeed delighted, when I had painted dozens of flowers brought me by an enthusiastic friend, and had exclaimed on their likeness to those of my old home, and had remarked how odd it was that others, which I had never seen elsewhere, except in the 'Sink Holes' near St. Louis, had been verified by eminent authorities as being the very same things. Such a wealth of rich-hued Compositæ (fifty varieties, at least), of golden and purple Vetches, of Convolvuli, wild Larkspurs, Primulas, Spireas, ground Orchids, and deep-stained Brambles, as flourished there! It was a dazzling herbaceous border a mile wide at least; a gigantic 'mixed bed' whose seed had been sown broadcast. But the best of all was the real grass. No person who has not been exiled to the tropics for many years,

where the grass is of wire, or of sharp swords, can know the pathetic joy we feel who come into our own again of velvet lawns and smooth pastures and tasselled meadows. Not even the fear of snakes can keep me from rolling in and on it there, like a young horse let loose in the fields! Eleven hundred missionaries, and the flat and nasal intonation of the Middle West, which is my country's least pleasant characteristic, could not lessen my rapture in it. A fat old lady with a waist as wide as her shoulders (most of these godly people consider it a crime to compress the figure unduly, and the idea seems to be that the bigger the waist the more souls they can gather in), said to me, "Seems jest like Home, don't it!" I agreed so heartily that I was soon hearing all her family history; and her son, and his wife and family of five children joined us (their 'field' was inland somewhere, in North China), and before we were done talking he was quoting Robert Louis and Walt Whitman, and we were old friends.

One other wild Nature garden which I must just mention was at Uraga—a shelf of blue Hydrangeas below a half-ruined, tree-embowered temple, on a cliff above the sea. The blue water, the pale strip of beach, the flowers drooping down to them—no artist but the Greatest had arranged it. I have not time or space to tell of a bamboo-shaded little dell above Hakone Lake, where the deep royal-blue of Monkshood,



with some late lingering white Lilies, made such a picture; nor of the fiery borders of Nerine (*Lycoris radiata*) which September shows at the edges of the golden fields of rice paddy; nor of a hundred other places where God has been the Gardener, and the heart leaps at the results. Like Wordsworth's daffodils, "they are the joy of solitude," and mine own in love.



## CHAPTER XIV

### FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

"Seven plants I send you, on a bamboo stand,  
Each symbolizing Life, happy and long."

*Princess Shirakawa, with a gift of grasses,  
at the New Year*

*(Translated by ARTHUR LLOYD)*

IT can hardly be pretended that this is a true garden topic, but so much garden lore and cult is included in its study that it would seem a pity to exclude it. The main scientific principle which is its basis is the same as that of the landscape artist—that is, a representation of Nature on a small scale. It is, like the tea-tray gardens, a display of a portion of scenery for the house and for intimate contemplation, and is always more than a simple bunch of flowers in a vase, or a bit of interior decoration. It is a method of artistic composition, too, like Japanese gardens, depending less on masses of colour and brilliancy of bloom than on the disposition of line, on effects of light and shade obtained by the relief of blocks of foliage, by the slender lines of stems.

In a word, both depend more on the drawing than on the colouring of the picture, although this does not imply that, to a cultivated eye, the colour is ever absent.

To the art of flower arrangement I came with a more spontaneous liking than I ever felt for *Hachi Niwa*, and I seriously think the Japanese are the only people in the world who really understand it. O Tourists of the great hotels of the Treaty Ports, dispute me not, from your memory of the atrocities of hideous crammed bunches of violently conflicting hues, in ugly vases, that took away your appetites when you sat down to breakfast! O Tourists who frequent foreign hotels anywhere in Japan, but still have no acquaintance with the out-of-the-way inns and private houses of the country, deny it not, for you do not know!

Wherever the Westerner has set his foot, and demands foreign food, a tablecloth and forks, he must, in acquiring these, give up the more spiritual luxury of daintily and pleasingly arranged flowers. He can get them both, but he must prove himself worthy. We spent a summer at a dear little primitive inn at Hakone, where the floral display on the tables in the dining-room profaned all sanctities of art; such monstrous mixtures as scarlet Geraniums, crimson Phlox, magenta Dahlias, and purple Zinneas were exhibited, thrust as thick as they

could be crowded into tumblers or horrible coloured glass vases.

The change back to Japanese methods was all done by kindness. I began by thanking the *nésan* for the fresh flowers, and went on by asking her to take away all but those of one colour, to delight some one else who had not had so much magnificence thrust upon her. Then I took a hand myself, and my table-mates with me, and we brought in wild flowers—a few, with some graceful grasses; and I unearthed a Japanese basket with a bamboo water-holder inside, as a vase. Then the *O Kami San* began to take an interest, and brought us flowers in a tall well-shaped Japanese jar; and finally the lordly proprietor himself took to seeing that our table boasted a charming arrangement, simple and beautiful, which was changed nearly every day. And so it was at every hotel we went to. If the Japanese servants see that the foreigner takes an interest—more, that he appreciates their methods, and prefers them to what they fondly fancy are his own, they will spare no trouble to place real masterpieces of composition before him. On the other hand, in out-of-the-way places, where the chance foreigner may happen to be an overbearing, half-educated, and wholly crass clerklet from a Treaty Port, who despises, in Japan, a daintiness, a fastidiousness of detail that he would not be likely ever to have seen in the haunts of his own class in

his own country, woe betide the tourist of finer feeling who follows him! If such a one jeers at the beautiful, nearly bare branches of Plum blossom that a Japanese is on his knees before (almost literally), those of better taste who come after him will probably have no opportunity to flout such a composition, for it will be kept strictly to the Japanese quarters, where it will be justly appreciated. In his book on Japan Mr. Tyndale told a sad tale of this sort, of some young blades from Yokohama, at Atami, who drove out 'those twigs' and adorned their Christmas table with champagne and 'Black and White' whisky bottles instead. The little hurt and disgusted landlady did not say one word in deprecation, nor mentioned the Biblical porker as she took out her pearl-strung boughs of bloom. And this was not because the substituted bottles were 'for the good of the 'ouse,' and represented a greater pecuniary advantage to herself, either.

Shortly before Young America and I had been permitted to assist in the manufacture of *Hachi Niwa*, I had begun, with a Japanese teacher, to study the art of flower arrangement. The friend with whom I was travelling, a Lady from California (it all requires capitals), said, "What do you want to study that for? I guess you can beat a Jap any day at that job. They take three hours to put an ugly old bare stalk and two Irises in a bowl, and

then they all make as much fuss and cackle over it as a hen does over an egg. Waste of time, I call it!"

But I liked to waste my time in that way, and while she helped our little maid to make beautiful 'shirt waists' for herself on the sewing-machine, I worked among the fragrant twigs of Pine, with Cherry branches, delicate, drooping grasses, and Chrysanthemums. A dear little Japanese lady, a friend of mine, got me the teacher—for they are always to be found. Every well-bred woman has studied this graceful art, without which she is not considered properly educated, in Japan. Such an ugly old woman this teacher was, with a name which meant 'Wave of the Sea.' She was an old-timer, with no modern notions, and it was a horror to me to look up from my work to find her grinning at me with glistening blackened teeth. (I like all the old survivals except the blackened teeth and shaven eyebrows of the married women.) She had not one word of English, and I very few of Japanese, and the books my little friend brought me were in characters I could not decipher; but gestures were eloquent, pictures told much, deeds spoke louder than words; there were tongues in the tree branches and intelligence in the Irises, so we progressed. And then some Japanese friends, who had of course studied the art, helped, too, by translating the directions into such dear, quaint











English. I spent several months very happily at the work, putting love and patience into it; but so great are its difficulties that I am still but a crude beginner.

The art—it is almost unnecessary to say—came from China, along with all the other garden and floral lore. The great Sen-no-Rikiu, landscape artist, high priest of the tea ceremonial, æsthete, and scholar, introduced it into Japan in the sixteenth century, when he elaborated the allied arts of garden planning and the ceremony of the tea-drinking to take place there. Confucianism was also concerned in the cult, and the rules laid down were according to the active and passive principles of Nature,<sup>1</sup> which the Japanese convert into the vigorous male, displayed and relieved by the quieter and humbler female qualities; just as, in their gardens, stones and plants are bound by those traditions and ideas. It would take more time and space than I can spare to this subject to explain the subtle and sometimes far-fetched notions that this involves.

The basis of the rules is triangulation. Old art lectures came back to me as I began to understand that this subtlest of Eastern æsthetics

<sup>1</sup> “The smug schoolmen . . . attributed all phenomena to the action of principles without life, which they called *Yin* and *Yang* (positive and negative principles of Nature). But how can there be action without life? Certainly the existence of activity presupposes a living God from whom it proceeds.”—From Hirata Atsutane (1776–1845). Translated by W. G. Aston.

had, for groundwork principles, exactly what the most recent of Western arts owned. The eye is thus focused on the whole design, or rather on the point of the whole design; for two sides of the triangle are longer than the third,—I need not say that a mathematical measurement is not taken of the material before it is used,—and the eye does not wander vaguely all over the group, seeking the *motif*.

Roughly speaking, and simply put, one takes three sprays of the chosen branch or flower, or three, in all, of the combination of plants to be used, and places the longest one in the middle, its end curved over like a bow. Then on one side is put another piece, about half its size, while on the other side is placed the third spray, half as long again as the second, and therefore half-way between the two others in length. Now, as I say, this is roughly speaking, for, although here is the fundamental principle, no stiff or angular design will pass, and the composition must be, above all things, free and natural-looking. No one would believe, who had not tried it, how difficult this is of attainment. One does not merely 'stick in a few twigs' by any means. To get just the curve one wants (or ought to have!), the branch may have to be heated gently over a brazier so as to make it more pliable, and to allow it to be bent, without breaking, into the desired attitude. Then stiffer sorts of plants have little notches



cut in the lower and upper sides of the stem, and one will be squeezed together while the other will have a wedge of bamboo stuck into it to curve it out properly. In sprays of Pine I have had to put in half a dozen of these blocks to get the thing into shape, and even then my critical teacher was not satisfied. Sometimes, when our material was very disobliging, we had to tie the recalcitrant limbs into the proper pose, using perhaps fine, invisible wire, or, in inconspicuous places, wood fibre, for the purpose. In learning to do this I got some insight also into the way in which trees are helped to grow in nursery gardens—the method by which the young plant is taught how to shoot in Japan. In flower arrangement we never went so far as to fasten the branches to a bamboo where a straight line was wanted (it never was wanted, however!), but I often longed to tie my poor cut bough to something, as an invisible curve was such an intangible thing to work by! One scheme my ugly, nice little teacher taught me was to make a series of indentations—they were hardly real cuts—all along the inner surface of a stem that was to be bent. I never got at all adept with Irises, and my arrangement of them was always stiff and conventional compared with hers, but I managed very fairly well with Cherry and Maple boughs. Chrysanthemums simply managed themselves, but Pine was ever unruly, and, like a curly-headed child who



resents the brush, always managed to look (to my eye, at least) beautiful in its own independent way, as if unaffected by my failure or success.

But the bending of the twig was only part of the training. A great field of study lay before me—of the flowers and leaves appropriate to different occasions, the sentiments which attached to the various plants, and all the poetical and literary allusions which the worker, thoroughly versed in the art, implied by his selection and arrangement. Our old editions of *The Language of Flowers*, which I used to pore over as a child, were nothing to that. One ought to know the whole literature of Japan by heart and have an almost equally good knowledge of the Chinese classic authors, be deeply imbued with Buddhist and Shinto lore, know something of India, and have, into the bargain, a poetic mind, in order to understand all the subtleties of the subject.

Mr. Basil Hall Chamberlain, in writing on the art of flower arrangement, as usual when touching on their æsthetics does not do the Japanese justice. He is really never in sympathy with the artistic side of the Japanese character, and is always inclined to gentle raillery on those subjects, chaffing mildly whenever he has occasion to mention any of the delicacies and refinements of art which the Western world is only now beginning to ap-

preciate. He avers that colour is not the keynote of the composition, but line, and the balance of proportion; which is true enough, except that he implies a lack of colour sense on the part of the Japanese, which is far from being a fact. As I have more than once stated in this book, the Japanese colour sense is so delicate, the perception of harmonies so fine, that people of bolder and coarser feeling are not competent to judge them. In grey, the 'Artist's Colour,' they find their chiefest delight; in soft mauves, faint blues, mellow fawns and browns, they are content. They do not care for blazing branches of Maple in the house—the *takenomo* seldom displays flamboyant bouquets of highly tinted flowers. The chastity, almost austere harmony, of a Japanese room, with its honey-coloured mats, its pale diffused lighting from paper-covered windows (like bright moonlight, or as if snow lay outside), is seldom broken by any flowers more gaily hued than silk-petalled Irises, Plum or rosy Cherry blossoms, or the sombre branches of Pine. Sometimes the only decoration in the whole room—for there never is any furniture, as all the world knows, and everything decorative is placed in the sacred niche—is an old block of half-decayed wood, covered with delicately beautiful, silvery fungi. A lichen-covered stone of good shape is often seen also, or some curious piece of wreckage from the beach, which has been painted warm iodine-

greys and blues and purples by the action of the sea ; or perhaps it may be a thick, gnarled stem of an ancient Pine bough, sawn through horizontally, with one picturesque needled spray thrusting itself out sideways from it, which has the place of honour. Again, a naked tree-branch, in Western eyes only prospectively good to look upon because of its swelling buds, will delight a Japanese family for a week or two. The exquisite lines of branch and twig are not lost on them, and they will see the coming of spring evolve out of the promise of winter, watching its development as they would the growth of a loved and lovely child.

Here again we find that poetic suggestion which is the great uplifting factor in all their arts. While their delight in the quaint, the fanciful is as unforced as a child's, as keenly appreciative as a latter-day Parisian artist's, their real eminence is due to the spiritual idea which they make the basis of their feeling for beauty.

The wide-topped jar or vase of bronze or porcelain, or perhaps only of bamboo, in which the flower composition is placed, is in itself almost sufficient decoration for a room, so pure and satisfying are its hues, so deep and cool is its tone, so fine its texture. Then it is set upon a black-wood or lacquered stand or pedestal of classic shape, which gives added dignity to the whole. Owing to the wideness

of the flat, open mouths of the receptacle usually employed, and the few sprays used, it is no mean task to make the separate branches 'stay put' in the water, and they have to be carefully blocked into place with neat little wedges of bamboo.

There are other receptacles, besides these open vases and flat-topped jars, in infinite variety—wicker baskets twisted and stained so that they resemble bronze; bamboo in a dozen different forms and shapes, as rafts, as buckets, as plain flower-holders; and almost as great stress is laid on the proper selection of these as on the arrangement to be put into them. For example, a bamboo stand for a wedding celebration must show no cut. That would be bad luck and bad taste, symbolic of a broken faith, a severed and maimed affection.


After these rudimentary principles have been learned, there are still many other phases of the cult to be studied—how many leaves should be left on a twig, for instance (in Bamboo, this number should be three or five); what plants may be combined to express a sentiment, etc. Of the more involved methods of setting out flowers, so that a particular place or poetical idea is suggested, I can say nothing. It is far beyond the elementary stage of my training; indeed, I doubt if any foreigner—bar Mr. Conder—could speak on this point with authority, so erudite is the cult. I quote the latter on the

subject of the Pine used at the 'Moon-viewing Festival':—

“Moon-viewing is at all times a favourite pastime of the Japanese, but the great Moon Festival of the year is on the fifteenth day of the eighth month. The more important dwellings have a special chamber from which the sight of the moonlit landscape can be enjoyed. The floral arrangement occupies the recess of the chamber, and has of course no real connexion with the outside prospect; but in the flower composition itself the moonlit landscape is expressed. A branch of Pine tree is used, and between the *principal* and *secondary* lines of the composition a special branch is introduced, fancifully called the 'moon-shadow branch'; a hollow gap is also formed between the foliage, bounded by a special branch called the 'dividing branch.' In the composition the idea is to suggest both the opening through which the moon can be partially observed and the dark branch which appears to cross its surface. To fully appreciate the analogy, one must be familiar with the scenery of Japan, and have seen, on a clear night, the irregular Pine trees standing out against the moonlit heavens.”

Aquatic plants have particular methods used for their display, and some of the loveliest compositions I have seen were of this sort.



Irises had little weighted clamps, like this,  put on their feet, which enabled them to stand up like lead soldiers, in a shallow, pale green dish ; and then these shoes of theirs were hidden with clean white pebbles, and the tiniest of gold-fish were set to swim about in the clear water with which they were covered.

*Narcissus Tazetti*, in the winter, is used in the same way (without shoes, however), and in this decoration the Chinese are nearly as clever as their one-time pupils, the Japanese. As in China, too, this is a favourite decoration at the New Year, and is one always obtainable, as the bulbs are so easily forced. One cannot wonder that *Narcissus* died of love for himself, these flowers of his are so beautiful, reflected in the mirror of clear water.

Another time, from out of a crystal bowl sprang a few stalks of arrow-shaped leaves, and in and out among the pale amber roots, as richly decorative as any part of the scheme, darted those glittering butterflies of the water, the gold-fish.

This recalls an incident which happened about that time, when Young America took to gardening. Some pretty little geishas, who had met the child on the street, brought him a globe of gold-fish as a present. We had been planting Morning Glory seed in blue and white pots in the veranda that day, and had dilated at length on the beauties that were in store for us when



they should grow up and bloom. As we were finishing some visitors arrived, and if wicked pride had not impelled us to exhibit our neatly planted pots before we gave them tea, it would have been all over with the gold-fish. The sweet, blue-eyed, fluffy-haired little angel was planting them! "An' when dey drow up, I will have lots and lots of 'ittle fishes, mudder," he shouted joyously. We were just in time to stop this scientific effort to grow a goldfish Vine.

It requires a liberal education to know what flowers, or combination of plants, to send as a gift in Japan. I found I had committed an enormity in selecting pink and white Lotuses for a christening, as they are associated with funerals and Buddhist shrines only. At New Year a gift of flowers should be a delightful arrangement of Pine (suggesting long life) and Plum blossoms (spiritual beauty); Bamboo may be added, as that also means long life and strength, as the Pine does, and uprightness as well. A tiny Orange tree laden with fruit, which indicates prosperity, is also a proper gift at that season. Various grasses are appropriate then too, as the poem at the beginning of this chapter indicates. On the Little Girls' birthday—always on the fifth day of the fifth month—Peach blossom must adorn the niche, and with dolls may be sent as presents to the tiny lady. For weddings there are many beautiful and

symbolic compositions. Of one of these Mr. Conder speaks thus :—

“At wedding feasts a double arrangement in a pair of similar standing vases is employed. For this purpose a branch of the *male* Pine is placed in one vessel, and a branch of the *female* Pine in the other. The general form of each design would be similar, but the branch of the *female* Pine facing the opposite vase should stretch a little beneath the corresponding branch of the *male* Pine. These together are called the ‘Destiny-uniting’ branches, and the complete design is said to typify eternal union.”

These same male and female Pines stand guard at all the gates at the New Year; the sharp and stubbly *Thunbergii* on the left, which is the side of honour in Japan, representing the man, and the graceful *P. densiflora* taking the woman’s lesser place.

And so it goes on; and when all is arranged, and the chosen bloom or branch is set out in the sacred niche, a charming ceremonial of admiration is gone through. It is almost a kind of worship of beauty. The adorer falls on his knees in front of the raised alcove, and bows his head to the ground, his palms pressed flat on the straw matting in front of him. Three times he does this; each time he lifts his head, drawing a deep sighing breath of contentment as his

eyes fall on the flowers. Then for long he sits in silent contemplation, taking into his soul something that is fine and pure and good, that emanates like perfume from them. Oh, the jewel of serenity and peace in the Lotus, or the poorest twig, so viewed !

It is a matter of moment, the choice of a gift as well as the arrangement. Once, in buying an offering for a Japanese friend at a nursery garden in Yokohama, I had to give the courteous elderly man who was serving me the most intimate details of her character, station in life, age, and appearance (to which, no doubt, he added his own views as to mine), before he would suggest what would be appropriate from the national point of view. Finally (and partly in consideration of my American birth) the choice fell upon a delightful dwarf Maple, very old, very quaint—and the Lady from California said, “Very ugly and very expensive.” In another book I relate the adventures that befell me and the Maple tree, but suffice it here to say that my friend was delighted, and delicately hinted that my taste in gifts was as that of her own nation. And so the grave little old man got none of the credit for the subtle international compliment.

If I had only thought to send her a poem I should have cleared my conscience and probably have got a charming Japanese verse in return ; for every one in Japan writes poems, from the

Emperor downward—I even suspected my *kuru-maya* in Kyoto of the practice.

Here is a translation of some fairly typical lines to accompany an arrangement of Pine and Plum blossoms from a woman to her husband ; but it must not be forgotten that, circumscribed by convention as their verses are, an original composition must be sent if any is :—

“ Oh ! sturdy Pine tree spray,  
 Take to my lord  
 This loving word,  
 And let the pearly flowers of the Plum  
 In fragrance say  
 From whom, love-weighted, they have come,  
 This New Year's Day.”

Poetry is deeply inwoven with this graceful art. Indeed, that is always the most alluring part of the study of anything in Japan—every subject opens up others, even though, as in this case, the one art is long enough for a life's work. And as sincerity is the touchstone of any real art, so it is of this—sincerity of feeling, of faithful labour, of loving study. “ We cannot touch another's heart with anything less than our own,” and, however humble the means of presentation of an art may be, informed and performed with truth and love it *is* art. I do not care if it is only an iron fire shovel, or a child's wooden pail ; if it is made with thought and joy in the work, it is a beautiful thing.

What, then, of God-wrought flowers and leaves, arranged with the same worship of beauty—shall the art of their use not become a thing of dignity and honour, an uplifting force to him who sees as well as to him who makes? They bring to us the message we have already in our hearts, take from us that which comes from our own souls.

## CHAPTER XV

### GARDEN FOLK-LORE AND LEGENDS—(I)

“ Chide me not, laborious band,  
For the idle flowers I brought;  
Every Aster in my hand  
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery  
But 'tis figured in the flowers;  
Was never secret history  
But birds tell it in the bowers.”

EMERSON.

THE garden and flower lore of Japan is strangely impersonal. As in her poetry, there is little of simile, or of the turning of plant life into human beings, or the endowment of personality on inanimate things. It seems as if the Japanese love flowers more for themselves than for the images they evoke, and yet what is love but a divine imagination! A man who loves his mistress for her beauty or for her character alone, who endows her not with transcendental qualities, has a narrow margin of affection on which to draw; that which is all explained is at the end of its interest. How, then, is it that the Japanese—of all the people on this earth the fondest, as a nation, of flowers—without the fairy wand of impersonation to



assist are such true and faithful lovers of them ! But, in spite of the absence of the fiction of personality—which forms the bulk of our own flower folk-lore—and partly, also, because the Japanese regard each other and their own egos in the same way (for instance, there are almost no personal pronouns in use in the language), so that the human entity is only a drop in the vast sea of divine entity—there are some lovely elusive thoughts, of spiritual ideas, colouring every object in Nature, giving rainbow tints even to the muddy waters of the ditch. Things are endowed with qualities, excellences, shades and glammers, instead of being simply transformed into men and women, gods and goddesses.

For instance, the *Wistaria* is likened not so much to a particular woman as to the lovely abstract ideal of one. Clinging, drooping, graceful, robed in the delicate pale hues a highly bred lady chooses, fragrant and bounteously sweet, she yet—although she is as her lord would have her, helpless and dependent on his (the sturdy Pine's) support—can still with tenacious tendrils hold the house of his love together, bind fast the framework of home. It rather spoils the pretty notion to remember that the lovely *Fuji*<sup>1</sup> is supposed to be over-fond of *saké*, and that she will be grateful if you will throw the dregs from your wine-cup on her roots !

<sup>1</sup> *Fuji no hana* is the Japanese name for *Wistaria* and does not here refer to the mountain.

One of the *Nō* plays is founded on a personification of the Wistaria vine, but it is somewhat more spiritual and remote than the same kind of legend would be with Western nations. A priest, on his way to view the famous *Fuji* of Tako no Ura, meets a sweet and beautiful young girl, who is soon to turn into the spirit of the Wistaria. She asks for his prayers to assist her soul to enter Paradise. Poor pretty flower! She loves the world, and the beauty and fragrance that are hers; but later, swaying and lithe in clinging purple silks, the long sleeves swinging like the great racemes of honey-scented blooms, she appears to dance her last dance before she vanishes to the happy Nirvana in which the priest's prayers have won her a place.

So also the *Convolvulus*, in one word, typifies all that is most brief and beautiful in life. The very essence of poetry is in it, to the Japanese mind, and they never weary of making delicate little verses on the subject, suggesting at least—for that, to them, is more desirable than expressing—the evanescent loveliness of life, and its eternity. One poet, Matsunaga, says—

“Although thy bloom may not outlast the day,  
O Morning Glory, would thy heart were mine!  
Eternity dwells in thy cup as in  
The thousand years that ring the stately Pine.”

A dozen more might be quoted.

The Pine tree (*Matsu*) symbolizes long life,

and it is believed that after a thousand years its sap turns to amber ; but it also implies other things, sturdiness and strength and steadfastness. Again, two Fir trees standing side by side (more especially the famous two at Takasago and Suminoye, of the popular old *Nō* drama) typify a husband and wife growing aged together. In the quaint old play the spirits of these trees are changed into an elderly peasant and his wife—a reversal of the plan of our folk-lore, which converts people into trees—and they converse together thus :

Tomonari, the guardian of a Shinto shrine, says, “Strange ! I see you old couple here together. What mean you, then, by saying that you dwell apart, one in distant Suminoye, the other in Takasago, divided from one another by seashore, hill, and province ?” To which the old woman replies, “What an odd speech ! Though many a mile of mountain and river separate them, the way of a husband and wife, whose hearts respond to one another with mutual care, is not far apart.”

“The hoar frost falls  
On the Fir tree twigs ;  
But its leaves’ dark green  
Suffer no change.  
Morning and evening  
Beneath its shade  
The leaves are swept away,  
Yet they never fail.













True it is  
 That these Fir trees  
 Shed not all their leaves ;  
 Their verdure remains fresh  
 For ages long,  
 As the Misaka trailing vine ;  
 Even amongst evergreen trees—  
 The emblem of unchangeableness—  
 Exalted is their fame  
 As a symbol to the end of time—  
 The fame of the Fir trees that have grown  
 old together.”<sup>1</sup>

Pines, Fir trees, and *Cryptomerias* have also the halo of sanctity about them. Whenever we find a stately avenue of the dark bronze and blue-green Firs, we may know that sooner or later they will lead us to a temple, or some sacred shrine. Buddhist and Shinto alike plant these great conifers on the hill sites where their holy places are, and they are almost as infallible a sign of the proximity of a temple as are rows of stone lanterns, or the red wooden gateways called *Torii*. At Nikko there is a tree, a conifer of some sort, set around with a stone railing, visited, loved and venerated still, which, when it was a baby plant a few inches high in a flower-pot cradle, is said to have been brought there by the great Iyeyasu. To this famous men come and leave a visiting card, as is the Japanese custom nowadays in going to heroes' graves.

Another tree, like the latter too tourist-

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Aston's translation.

ridden to appeal to me as it should have done, is the great Pine tree at Karasaki, on the shores of Lake Biwa. It is hardly strange, however, that it should be considered sacred; for, reversing the old Greek adage, if the gods did not love this tree why has it lived so long? Again, such size, is it not miraculous? Murray says that the trunk is thirty-five feet in circumference, that it is ninety feet high, and that the length of its branches, from north to south, is two hundred and eighty-eight feet. To me it was a monstrous shambling Caliban, a caricature of the grandeur I expected. Crutches of bamboo and stone pillars supported its tottering old limbs, a silly little roof covered its bald spot up above, and the holes and cavities in its trunk had been stopped with plaster to prevent the spread of decay. We bought post-cards, and hated the place. The lofty spirit of Old Japan dwells not in that decrepit old hulk, which survives without dignity, lives without that beauty or joy or usefulness, which, if man or creature have not prolonged, life is but a mockery and a disgrace.

The Bamboo (*Také*), in addition to its almost limitless practical uses, has many pretty legends connected with it, and its place in decoration, in sentiment, and in poetic significance is an honourable one. Although it is a grass, and "in the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth," yet long life, in Chinese (and, hence, in Japanese)

eyes, is suggested by it. All over the Far East it is considered very lucky, and many are the qualities with which it is supposed to endow the wearer; strength, vigour, uprightness, these are the main ones; while its constant colour suggests virtue and purity in a woman, and constancy—a rare gift, I fear, in that fair land—in a man. With the Chrysanthemum, the Plum, and the Orchid, the Bamboo forms the company of the ‘Four Floral Gentlemen’—a grouping that bears thinking on, aside from the quaint charm of the idea. In picture lore, sparrows are always put with the Bamboo, as are nightingales with the Plum, and quails with Reeds and other grasses.

My first introduction to the old stories connected with the Bamboo was in a curio-shop in Yokohama, where I was buying some beautiful old faded embroideries. The Lady from California, who had paid for her gay new work four times what I had given for my ‘washed-out old rags,’ as she called them, was very indignant that, on every subsequent visit we paid to the shop, even the proprietor, as well as every available assistant, hurried to show me old treasures the moment they spied me, while the young man who exhibited magenta Pæonies and vivid roosters to her cast constant rueful glances towards the other group. It was not that I bought much, but that a Japanese, even a shopkeeper in mercantile Yokohama, will

never tire of showing the beautiful things he loves himself, and recounting the stories connected with them, if he finds a sympathetic audience. And so the following year to these kind, friendly people I went again, with Himself, and we looked, and they talked, and we bought a little, and wasted a lot of their time. One of the things we carried away with us, besides their good wishes, was a *faroushiki*, and this legend. Now, a *faroushiki* is a handkerchief-shaped piece of silk, in which a gift is wrapped up for presentation. It, and the lacquer box which actually contains the present, have to be returned. As it is a permanent institution, and may convey many beautiful things, it is correspondingly rich and fine, and there are inexorable laws as to the colours and subjects appropriate to every possible occasion. This one had been purposely made to enwrap what we might call a christening present to a child. It is of the palest moonlight-blue satin, lined with scarlet crêpe (Oh! that scarlet, like velvet Nasturtiums), and on it is embroidered an old man, in a driving snowstorm, bending over a clump of Bamboo shoots with a triumphant expression on his face. And the story, from China, I believe, is that a dutiful son, being asked by his aged mother to get her some Bamboo shoots in the depth of winter, was so full of filial piety as to go out to perform the impossible, and so great was his faith that a miracle

happened, and these, sprouting through the snow, were the first green-gold shoots of the Bamboo. The son was represented as old because he afterwards became one of the Twenty-four Wise Men, who all lived to a great old age. I only hope that the child who first received a gift so wrapped was old enough to appreciate it all, but the story is sure to have been told him later, if not then, as it is a great favourite in Japan.

Another well-loved tale is that of the Moon Princess, who appeared from out the shining stem of a Bamboo to an old man, a wood-cutter, who took her home and adopted her, naming her *Kaguyahime* ('The Shining Damsel'). She quickly grew up to be a most beautiful woman, and had innumerable suitors, to each of whom she allotted a task, on the performance of which (generally an impossibility) she promised to marry him. Naturally, they all failed. The Mikado himself then became a candidate, but she refused him without any test, though they remained good friends nevertheless, and subsequently kept up a correspondence, consisting chiefly of sentimental verses (*Tanka*). She was finally taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot, which came for her from her real home in the Moon.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is taken from the classic *Taketori Monogatari* (meaning 'The Romance of the Bamboo Gatherer'), which has been delightfully rendered into English by Miss Yei Theodora Ozaki, in her *Japanese*



Another story connected with Bamboos, as familiar as our 'Cinderella,' is 'The Tongue-cut Sparrow.' An aged childless couple dwelt far out in the country. The old man was kind, gentle, and cheerful, but his wife was a cruel, scolding shrew. The husband had a pet Sparrow of which he was very fond, as was the bird of him; but the old woman was jealous of the little creature, and hated it. One day, in the absence of the man at his work in the fields, the old woman missed some starch which she had mixed over-night, and became very angry at being unable to find it, upon which the Sparrow came and confessed to having eaten it, and prayed for forgiveness. But she, furious with the little bird, cut out its tongue with a pair of scissors, and drove it from the house. When the old man returned he was greatly exercised in his mind at the disappearance of his little pet, and wanted to know where it was; but his wife at first prevaricated, and said she did not know what had become of it. On being pressed, however, she acknowledged what she had done, and why, and attempted to justify herself. Her husband was heart-

*Fairy Book.* The Japanese, however, do not consider it a fairy tale by any means. In the same book is the story of 'The Tongue-cut Sparrow,' of which I here give a very brief résumé. Both these, by other translators, and many others, may be bought for a small sum at any Japanese bookstall, beautifully printed and illustrated in colours on crêpe paper, from the pens of various translators, and published by Hasegawa of Tokio. Some are Lafcadio Hearn's translations, if I remember rightly.

broken, and in the morning, instead of going to his work, he set forth to try to find the bird. After walking many, many miles, stopping at every clump of Bamboos and calling to it, he came at last to a big Bamboo wood, at the edge of which, to his great delight, he found his little favourite, which greeted him effusively. It showed him that a new tongue had grown to replace that which the cruel old woman had so barbarously cut out, telling him that he was not to trouble himself more about it, as it was now quite right again. Thereupon the old man knew at once that the Sparrow was a fairy. Then the fairy asked him to follow her, and took him to a most beautiful house in the middle of the wood, and entertained him there to dinner. After dinner the old man got up to go, saying that he had far to travel, and that his wife would be very angry if he were late. The little Sparrow tried hard to persuade him to remain for the night, but when he insisted on going she brought in two boxes, one large and the other small, and asked him to choose one of them as a present. He chose the smaller, as being the lighter, and, after much bowing and many compliments and thanks, took his departure on his long walk home.

On arrival at his hovel, late at night, he was met with a scolding from his wife, who wanted to know where he had been and why

he was so late. The old man tried to pacify her by showing her the box, and related all his adventures, but she continued to nag, and to find fault with everything. They then opened the box, which they found to be full of gold and silver coins and many other valuable things. At this the woman was furious with the old man, because he had chosen the smaller box, and showered abuse on him.

In the morning the greedy old woman, who had been making her plans for getting the big box, made her husband tell her the way to the Sparrow's house, and, without thinking that the Sparrow, which was now undoubtedly a fairy, might wish to retaliate upon her for the loss of its tongue, started off at once on the long tramp.

Arrived at the house she knocked loudly at the door, and was greeted politely by the Sparrow, who, though very much surprised at the visit and the frame of mind which prompted it, was much too well-mannered to give any expression to its feelings. The old woman wasted no time in formalities, however, but bluntly stated the object of her visit, which was to get the large box that her husband, she said, had stupidly left behind. The Sparrow at once acquiesced, and had the box brought out, upon which the old woman, without a word of thanks, promptly shouldered it and walked off.

The box was very heavy, so she could not go fast, as she wanted to do in order to find out its contents (for even she could not so violate every rule of Japanese etiquette as to look at the gift in sight of the donor); instead, she had to sit down and rest frequently, and it was during one of these rests that her desire to see what was inside the box overcame her. After looking stealthily round to see if anyone was in sight, she carefully opened it, expecting to find further stores of wealth. What she found, however, was a selection of the most hideous and malevolent demons and goblins, which bounced out on her like a Jack-in-the-box, and gave her such a thorough fright that she repented of her evil ways and became the kindest, best-natured, and hardest-working old woman that ever was, and the old couple ended their days in happiness and prosperity.

Not all the Bamboo stories are pleasant. One tells of a Chinese victim of torture, who was bound down upon a bed of the plants overnight, and by the morning the shoots, so fierce and rapid was their growth, had pierced right through his body. But this is too gruesome a tale with which to leave the subject of the beautiful Bamboo, so I will tell you that, in Japan, if lovers will give their names each to a branch of Bamboo, and tie the two twigs together with a long pin of thorn, forming a wish, after a time the wish will come true—for

what does Bamboo mean but constancy ! And what will lovers wish for but the continuance of their love !

But the Bamboo is also associated with the 'religious plants,' and Mr. Percival Lowell in his absorbingly interesting book, *Occult Japan*, never omits to mention that the 'eight points' in the sacred space made for the Shinto rites of spirit possession are marked by Bamboo wands, with the leaves left at the top in tufts.

About the Lotus flower a wealth of mystic lore has accumulated, for it is the emblem of Buddha, and its very prayer is "Oh, the jewel in the Lotus !" (*Om Mani Padmi Hum*). The blooms outspread, like the sun's rays, are emblems of Buddha's enlightenment, and the spokes marked on the top of the seed-pod denote the wheel of Eternity. In the ponds of every temple the plants may be found springing—a lovely token of purity, spotless and unsoiled—from the mud of their miry bed. Once this symbolized the spiritual triumph of the body over the debasing and polluting acts of birth and of death ; but now it is no more associated with the new life, I suppose because it is too favourite an emblem of death. At funerals Lotus flowers of gold and silver paper are carried, and real flowers, if obtainable, are set in the bamboo flower-holders on the graves. At the *Bon*, the 'Festival of the Dead,' the food



for the returning spirits is set out on Lotus leaves. Even the sacred mountain, Fuji, is likened to the Lotus, and is called *Fugo Ho*, meaning 'Lotus Peak,' and truly may it be said to resemble the flower, deep rose at the base, pale rose where the morning sun paints its top with a concealed and secret heart of fire. In an old Buddhist *Sutra* we hear of a pond in Paradise "where the Lotus flowers large as a carriage wheel grow; the green flowers shine in green light, the yellow flowers in yellow light, red flowers in red light, and the white flowers are supreme in beauty and odour." In a Buddhist temple in Kyoto may still be seen an old piece of tapestry, with the figure of Buddha exquisitely embroidered in silk which has been drawn from the stem of his flower, the Lotus. It was done, they say, by the beautiful and devout poetess, Princess Hase. Again, it is the dream of lovers to sit some day together on the 'Lotus Throne'—so says Miss Du Cane; in other words, to die together, that is, to commit suicide! She also tells a story from Chinese literature of the extravagant Lord Tokonko, of the Sei province, which I have not met with elsewhere. This nobleman had a mistress named Han Hi, a singularly lovely girl. One day he made Lotus petals of pure gold and scattered them in his garden for her to walk upon, in order that he might compare their beauty with hers. He found them well matched. For even to this



day the swaying, gliding walk of a graceful woman is likened to the balanced, rhythmic poise of the Lotus on its stalk.

Another plant which, like the Lotus, is associated with religious ideas is the Hemp. As the 'most precious of the productions of the soil' it was, in old days, presented as an offering to the gods in the Shinto temples, and it was also used in the ceremony of purification. In modern times paper has taken the place of the precious material, and so the idea of the ceremony is lost. Again, the priests, in offering gifts to the gods at the altar, tied up their long ceremonial sleeves with hempen cords, or the fibre of a creeping plant. Nowadays the serving-maids fasten back their sleeves with ribbons in the same way, and the act, now one for convenience only, has lost its former standing as a token of service and devotion.

The Plum blossom (*Ume no hana*) is masculine, but it typifies spiritual strength and beauty. If we translate this into courage, it sounds like a more manly characteristic. Of all the flowers of this flowery land it is the one most often referred to in poetry, one might well say the best loved. With its delicate petals, white as snowflakes, rosy as a child's cheeks, deep red as a woman's mouth, it seemed the last flower to place as the foremost of the 'Four Floral Gentlemen,' to liken to the sturdy qualities of a man, but as I looked longer I saw the subtle comparison.

First flower of the year, braving the bleak winds, and even the snow, as early as January, what more courageous ? And with trunk and branches hoary and grey (pure silver in the sunlight), and every year the returning bloom—a true type of Japan, with the new hopes and promise on the old rugged stock. The people who venerate age love the Plum for its beauty of crooked bough and ancient trunk, as much as for the frail promise of spring in its bloom ; and I, who am half a Japanese in this, can sympathize with those who nip off the buds, so that the exquisite lines of stem and branch may not be lost with overweight of fragrant flowers.

It is a tragedy when the petals begin to fall. “ Alas, that spring should vanish with the Rose.” There is a story told of a famous poet and courtier of the Fujiwara family, named Saigyô, who, in driving away a bird that with its fluttering wings was scattering the Plum blossoms, killed it. When he reached home his wife told him that she had dreamed that she was changed into a bird, and that he had struck her. It made such an impression on his mind that he retired from Court, and from attendance on the Emperor, and became a monk.

I love the soldier who, the good Rein tells us,—Kajiwara Genda Kagesugi was his fine, big-mouthed name,—went into battle in the fierce days of the twelfth century with fresh branches of Ume in his quiver, and I do not

believe for an instant, as the Japanese do, that it was from them alone that he gained his splendid courage. The soldier who carries a flower into a fight carries already in his heart that which cannot be defeated—faith in his cause, and high resolve; better than a thousand scapularies and charms—the noble faith that, centuries later, defeated Holy Russia.

Another man, a sage, Sugawara-no-Michizana, whose memory is haloed in Plum blossoms, does not thrill me as Kajiwara does, but his name inspires the Japanese schoolboy even more, I fancy; for the twenty-fifth of every month is a holiday in his honour, and on that date in June a great festival is celebrated each year. I cannot quite see his greatness, except through martyrdom, which is an unhappy fruit of virtue that does not appeal to me. This man had been a Minister to the Emperor, and, losing the fickle favour of princes, he was banished, and died. Every one felt sorry, and he was canonized as a saint, and given the name of Tenjin, or 'Heavenly God.' A play has been written about him,<sup>1</sup> and every year verses composed in his honour and praise hang, like Orlando's to Rosalind, from the twigs of Plum trees all over the country.

Another story of the Plum is of the daughter of the poet Kino Tsurayuki, whose best-loved tree was the one chosen to replace that of the

<sup>1</sup> *Sugawara Tenjin Ki.*

Emperor Mura Kami at the palace at Nara, which had died. The fair lady was loath to part with her treasure, so, with a fine eye for effect, wrote a *tanka* and attached it to the tree when it was taken away. The Emperor was, of course, so struck with the verses that he sent the tree back to her. Here are the verses, as translated by Captain Brinckley :—

“ Claimed for our Sovereign’s use,  
 Blossoms I’ve loved so long,  
 Can I in duty fail?  
 But for the nightingale,  
 Seeking her home of song,  
 How shall I find excuse? ”

The petals from a branch of Plum sometimes fill the rôle of the Marguerite with Japanese girls. Three is the magic number which will bring good luck, if the petals are properly arranged, and if the number is repeated often enough.

The Cherry blossom signifies bodily or sensuous beauty, or, if the man who tells you is very patriotic,—for this may well be called the national flower of Japan,—beauty in the abstract. It does for them all. About it, also, there are pretty legends—the wonder is that there are not more, for, like a lovely, alluring woman, the Cherry blossom would seem born for adventure and story. It is, with the Plum, the

most lavishly sung of by the poets. There is a certain fitness, too (for Wine, Women, and Song have from time immemorial been catalogued together), that when viewing Cherry blossoms *saké* is the prescribed drink. This custom has been in vogue since the fifth century of our era ; up to that time the Cherry blossom does not seem to have made any special appeal. The Emperor Rikiu, banqueting in a pleasure boat with courtiers and song on a lake in one of the Royal pleasure grounds, like King Cophetua saw the beautiful beggar maid, the Cherry Blossom, and declared her fair. She had attracted his attention by falling into his cup of *saké*. "Without wine, who can properly enjoy the sight of the Cherry blossoms?" he cried. I could improve on this story by putting a more gallant speech into the mouth of the monarch, but history would not bear me out, so I refrain. I should like to be able to say that from that incident dated the rosy blossom's royalty, but, as a matter of fact, it was not proclaimed the national flower until three slow centuries had passed. However, it has been since then a bloom favoured by Royalty as well as by poets (often they are one and the same, in Japan); and to an Imperial lover, the Emperor Shomu, is due the credit of planting the first trees near the palace at Nara. He had seen the rustic beauty while hunting on Mount Mikasa, in Yamato, and



sent some of the flushed and lovely boughs, with verses in their praise, to his consort. Jealousy is hardly an attribute of Japanese wives, so a harem of the young trees was set out close to the palace, and the practice is now general throughout the country: priest and peasant, as well as prince, have groves of them, or at the least single trees, near their dwellings.

Another exalted admirer of the Cherry was the Shogun Yoshimune, who is said to have planted ten thousand of the trees along the banks of the Tamagawa (which is the main water-supply of the great city of Tokio), in order, so the charming story has it, that the purity of the flowers should also keep the water pure!

Of one of the famous Fujiwara family in the twelfth century, who so dearly loved the flowers that he was nicknamed 'Sakura Machi,' and who had planted over a hundred trees near his house, the story is told that, miserable at their short-lived beauty, he prayed to the god Taisan-fu-kuu to let them last longer. His prayer was answered, and for three even weeks the ruddy glory lingered.

But loved as the Cherry blossoms are by Emperor and artist, by poet and plain man alike, this is not for their sensuous beauty alone, not for their suggestion of an almost human claim to flesh and blood, their yet



nearer touch to divinity in the perfection of delicate and ethereal grace ; they stand for an idea, they represent a symbol. As the Plum speaks of the still beating heart of old Japan, so the Cherry typifies the old and ever-new spirit of Chivalry (*Bushido*), the knightly ideal—the ideal of Japan.

“Among flowers the Cherry,  
Among men the Samurai,”

and—

“It is a Cherry blossom, it falls when it must,”

suggest, in the haunting, elusive way of the Japanese, the courage and faith of Japan.

## CHAPTER XVI

### GARDEN FOLK-LORE AND LEGENDS—(II)

“ Herbs and trees, stones and rocks, shall all enter into Nirvana.”  
*Buddhist Proverb*

THE Peach (*Momo*) has neither the popularity with the masses nor the high regard of the select few that the Plum and Cherry blossoms have. It is the favourite flower of the little girls' festival, early in March, of which more elsewhere. Hideyoshi's palace on Momo Yama (Peach Mountain), the most beautiful of any of the many beautiful palaces he built, was set about with Peach orchards, and how glad must have been the old warrior's heart in the spring!

A favourite story of the Peach is that of Momotaro, a kind of Far Eastern version of Tom Thumb. An old woman (it always seems to be an *old* woman in these legends) was washing clothes on the bank of a stream, when she saw a magnificent Peach come floating along, which she charmed to the bank with a song. It was so unusually fine that she stopped her work and hurried home to take it to her

old husband, who was away at *his* work. So she had to wait for his return, and then, when they had sufficiently admired the fruit, they prepared to eat it; but before they had time to cut it open it broke in two, and a tiny child stepped out of the middle of it, and informed them that the gods had sent him to be the son of their old age. The child grew up to years of discretion and developed into a model son; but at the age of fifteen he asked permission to go away on a long journey for the purpose of fighting and conquering a band of devils who had their stronghold on an island to the north-east of Japan. After some conversation the old man gave his consent, and Momotaro started off on his perilous journey. On his way he collected a little band of followers, a somewhat heterogeneous lot, consisting of a Dog, a Monkey, and a Pheasant, with whose assistance eventually he subdued and exterminated the demons, and returned in triumph loaded with treasure. He brought also with him two lovely damsels, daughters of daimios, whom he had released from the clutches of the devil chief; and him too he brought as a prisoner.

Although the Peach is a fast-growing tree—*Momo* means a hundred as well as a peach, and is the emblem of longevity—it is an appropriate gift for a girl or a woman. This notion must, I think, have come from China, where the

ruddy blossoms or the carmine buds of the Peach are an invariable accompaniment of the China - New - Year (usually occurring in February), and where the blossoms are much prized. There is a tale of a certain miraculous being, named Seibo, a ruler in Western China, who sent some of the fruit to the Emperor Butei. This variety, he told him, bore fruit only once in three thousand years, and if he would eat them he would live for ever. Evidently Butei died before he had time (or inclination?) to eat the Peaches, for we do not hear of him to-day, and no Chinese Peach which one sees in our times would inspire one with even the wish for eternal life.

Another pretty fairy story is that of the Old Man who made the Trees to Blossom. A poor old man had a dog of which he was very fond, and his affection was reciprocated. Living next door was another old man, of a cruel, avaricious, evil disposition, who lost no opportunity of beating and otherwise ill-using the dog whenever he got a chance. One day the owner of the dog heard him barking loudly in the field at the back of the house, and went out to see what was the matter. He found the dog digging furiously under a Yenoki tree, and, getting a spade, immediately began to assist him. After digging for some time, he found a very large heap of gold and silver coins, which he and his

wife carried home with great glee, for they were now rich. The neighbour, who in the meanwhile had seen everything through the hedge, became very envious, for, as he said to himself, why should not he also find a treasure? So he borrowed the dog and went into his field, where he too had a Yenoki tree, and made the dog begin digging there. But when he got his spade and dug deeper he could find nothing but dirt. Furious at his disappointment he killed the dog and buried him in the hole he had dug. When the dog's master heard of this he was very sad, and asked his neighbour to give him the tree under which the dog was buried, which was agreed to; whereupon he cut it down and made a rice mortar of a part of the trunk. This mortar turned out to have miraculous properties, for it not only pounded the rice itself, but multiplied it, and made it into cakes which lasted indefinitely. The neighbour then borrowed the mortar, but was not able to profit by it, as it changed the rice into dirt; so he burnt it. Then our old man begged for the ashes of the mortar, which were given him; and, accidentally spilling some of them on a withered Peach tree, he saw to his astonishment that the tree instantly blossomed. The fame of this spread all round the country-side, and he was summoned to the palace of the daimio, who had many withered Peach trees, which our friend made to blossom; at which the daimio was so delighted that he











raised the old man to great honour and riches, while the cruel neighbour was cast into prison, whence he never emerged.

The Pæony is another flower more admired in China than in Japan. The reason for this, if one regards the characteristics of the two races, is not far to seek. China is all for the rich outside, Japan for the delicate heart of things. China is magnificent, flamboyant, in her tastes; Japan's are refined, subdued, fair without show, the most perfect in the world. The splendid and gorgeous reds and pinks and crimsons of the Azaleas and Pæonies are all very well for savages like the Chinese and myself; the Japanese will revel in the pearly half-tints, the mauves and dove colours of their Irises and Wistarias, the pale rosy clouds of their masses of Plum and Cherry.

The Pæony is called 'the rich man's flower.' It is difficult and expensive of cultivation, even in the hands of an expert Chinese gardener, as I have found to my cost; and so ungraciously does it reward patience and care in its growing in Japan that it is ranked with the favours of princes. It is associated with lions and peacocks (both imported emblems) in the decoration of temples and palaces. It is, perhaps because of its fickleness, likened to a woman—and not to too good a woman either, for in their heart of hearts I am sure the Japanese regard her as a

painted Jezebel. Most of the stories in its praise come from China. The prettiest is that of Yo Ki Hi, the favoured concubine of the Emperor Genso, who touched with her red-stained finger-tips the Pæony petals, and (in shame, or rivalry, or delight, the story tells not) they turned crimson.

But Pæonies have also a ghostly association, in this case not so much in China as in Japan. The lanterns at the *Bon* (the 'Festival of All Souls' Day') are decorated with that seemingly incompatible, big, bouncing flower. Lafcadio Hearn retells, in his inimitable way, the tale of a ghost play that is given at this season, which I must condense, but cannot omit.

O Tsuyu, a beautiful girl, was in love with Shinzaburo Ogi-hara, a samurai, and died of love for him, being accompanied to the land of the spirits by her faithful maid, O Yone. Ogi-hara was ignorant of their death. One evening he saw two young women passing the gate of his house, with Pæony lanterns in their hands, and he asked them in. These were the ghosts of the two girls. Every evening for a week they came to the house to pass the night there, leaving very early in the morning before it was light. Then Ogi-hara was told that they were not living beings but ghosts, and he appealed to a priest for a charm against ghosts, which he hung up at the door, and for some time it effectually kept them out. But one night he



forgot to hang up the charm, and he was found dead in his bed in the morning.

Another Pæony story, which Miss Du Cane gives, comes from China :

Kosei was a young scholar who lived in Kaseikyu, a place famous for its Pæonies. One morning on looking out of his window he saw a beautiful young lady, dressed in white, standing among the Pæonies, which were then in bloom. He saw her there every day, and fell in love with her. Then she appeared to him in a dream, and they promised to love each other ; and they thus met every day. At last she told him that she had to go away ; and the next morning he found that all the Pæonies had disappeared, and he saw her no more for a long time. But at last she appeared to him again, and told him that she was the spirit of the Pæony. While the flower was in bloom she was a living spirit, but after the flower was dead she was only the ghost. She also told him to be careful to water the roots of the old Pæonies every day, and the following morning he found that new shoots were springing up from these old roots.

The Azalea, for some inscrutable reason, seems to have few superstitions or stories connected with it. I was told in Hong-Kong that the Chinese regarded the scarlet flower at least as unlucky, and that its introduction into the house would be followed by a death. This was then contradicted, and the horrid idea



accredited to Japan. But there too it was vehemently denied; and, if any such belief in its powers of misfortune exists, our servant must be very careless for *us*, in running us into danger, for my entire house in Hong-Kong is decorated for six weeks in the early spring with rosy Azalea branches, brought in from the hill-side by our Chinese gardener. Moreover, in Japan my little Japanese maid kept fresh red and pink Azaleas in my room, and, still more to the point, in my children's day nursery, as long as they lasted. The white Azalea, they told me, was the returned soul of a woman who had died of love, and a wicked friend asked if the yellow flower was the soul of a Chinaman who had not.

Of other ill omens about flowers I may say here that the alleged aversion of the Japanese to the so-called 'Death Lily' (the *Nerine*) is greatly exaggerated. One reads constantly that it is never seen in the peasants' houses, or anywhere except, disregarded, at the edges of rice-fields. I can state emphatically that I have frequently seen it in bamboo vases in the niche of small shopkeepers' houses; I have seen the children gathering great bunches of the blood-red blooms; and I have been given nose-gays of the fatal flower by good old country-folk who, if they had had so baleful a superstition about it, would be the last to offer me such a gift. I do not imagine, however, that they care particularly themselves for these Lilies. Red,

except in the autumn Maples, when the bright, glowing sun seems to call for gaiety and brilliant colours, does not seem to appeal to them. The Nerine (*Lycoris radiata*) blooms at the time of the September rains, and the name 'Equinox Flower,' as it is often called, is really, I believe, the only suggestion of bad omen there is about it. In the same way a red Camellia, Mr. Chamberlain points out, is regarded by the Japanese as suggestive of a decapitated head, and I can understand it (though he says he cannot), because the heavy, hard, round bloom drops or breaks off in such a horrid sudden manner from the neck! Yet the glossy leaves of the same handsome tree decorate more than half the wayside shrines all over Japan—a poor compliment, if they really disliked it as much as such a belief, in so refined and æsthetic a people, would imply.

The Iris—the Undine of plants—is never contented without water, and she is happiest when she can stand ankle-deep in it, not stirring on her slender stalk, so that she may use the smooth surface of the pool as a mirror. The Iris and the Wistaria are both suggestive of the feminine qualities, but the latter has the more clinging grace, while the former, like a Quakeress, has more shyness and modesty. But the Iris—or rather the Shobu or Sweet Flag so often mistaken for the Iris—is a healer too, and her very presence is supposed to ward off disease. On the fifth of May, the 'Festival of the Boys,' its sword-

like leaves bound in sheaves are hung from the eaves of all the houses, are put to perfume all the baths, and are even steeped as tea or drunk in *saké*. One of the ceremonies of Purification used formerly to consist of waving ferns and rushes (and are not Shobu leaves implied ?) over the person to be purified, and later these were flung into the water.<sup>1</sup> In more recent times, first linen and then sheets of paper, called *unsa* (really *gohei*), were substituted. I cannot find any reason for this; the fact is recorded by several writers without comment, so I must be my own authority for explaining it. Cleanliness is ever next to godliness, and often ahead of it, in Japan. The fragrance of the Shobu makes cleanliness a joy, and therefore a rite on the day when the plants have first begun to appear. The medicinal efficacy of the root of the plant those persons may know who remember the 'Sweet Flag Root' of their childhood. What wet feet we got hunting for it! How nasty it tasted, nibbled raw! And what fabulous prices, the farmers' children told us, the 'Shakers' who made 'medicine from the Yarbs' would give for it! Poor, graceful plants, sacrificed to make a spring tonic!

I like better to think that the pretty feminine things have given up their lives in

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Percival Lowell's *Occult Japan* for an account of the full ceremonial.

the cause of beauty—made into powder, to take the shine off a dainty lady's cheek, or to dry the dimpled, rosy skin of a baby. They say that, in the old days, in order to save their Shobu roots, and thus their fragrant powder, when the order went out that every available inch of land was to be planted in rice, the Irises were set on the house roofs. From this exalted position they have not to this day been banished, although now poor indeed is the house which has not Iris plants in its garden as well.

All sorts of delicate compliments and poetic congratulations are conveyed to friends by these latter flowers, but the colour should be considered carefully, and on no account must the most lovely of mauves or purples be sent on the occasion of a marriage, as that is a fickle colour, and would presage change. A girl may not even meet her betrothed for the first time in a kimono of a soft violet shade, nor wear an obi of purple brocade then, and how a foreign lover's offering of violets would be regarded by her I cannot say.

Shobu leaves are religiously significant, too, and are used in Shinto rites of Purification; while, waved in the air and thrashed upon the ground, they keep away malignant spirits.

A Japanese friend has given me a legend about the Shobu, which originally came from China. Once upon a time, in China, a man was chased by a demon, and he was forced to take refuge in

a Shobu field. To his great astonishment, the evil spirit could not come into the field on account of the odour of the Shobu. As this is supposed to have happened on the fifth of May, the custom of using Shobu, as a token of casting out of evil spirits, was adopted on that date.

Many more quaint and charming ideas about other plants and things there are to tell. There is the Cassia or Cinnamon tree (*Katsura*), for instance, which grows in the moon, and reddens in the autumn with the changing leaves. The Japanese also have a 'Herb of Forgetfulness' (*Wasurigusa*), and Mr. Chamberlain has translated a pretty poem about it—

"I asked my soul where springs th' ill-omened seed  
That bears the herb of dull forgetfulness;  
And answer straightway came: 'The accursed weed  
Grows in the heart which has no tenderness.'"

There is the pretty coupling of the Lespedeza and her lover the Stag—the modest Lespedeza, so loved by the Japanese. Then there is the tale of the Melon Rock (*Kwashi Seki*), in the Choin-in Temple at Kyoto, from which a Melon seed sprouted, splitting the stone by the strength of its growth; and grew, bloomed, and bore fruit, all in a single night.

The Persimmon, an uninteresting fruit enough to me, in the East, although so bound up with childish adventures in Virginia and



Arkansas, took on a new charm after I heard the story of the Poet of the Persimmon tree.

A great warrior, called Ayabe, one day found in his garden, standing beneath a Persimmon tree, a child more beautiful than anything human can be. Asked who he was and whence he came the child replied, "I have no father and no mother, but the moon and the winds obey me, and poetry's my delight." The husband and wife at once adopted the child, and named him Hetomaro (Kakinomoto), which means 'Persimmon tree,' and he became in time a great poet. The guileless chronicler concludes that the veracity of this tale is unimpeachable, as the surname Ayabe is still borne in that place, and a Persimmon tree grows on the poet's grave, whose fruit is pointed and black at the end, like a pen (ink-brush)!

In the *Utsubo Monogatari* we read of demons cutting up an immense Kiri tree (*Paulownia imperialis*),<sup>1</sup> when a boy comes down from the sky with a fine accompaniment of thunder and lightning, and a dragon to ride on, and demands part of the tree to make into lutes. He makes thirty lutes, and sets off again with a convenient whirlwind to carry the musical instruments for him.

One curious belief is that only virile, healthy young men may graft trees or plant seed. A hundred—a thousand—graceful, pleasing ideas

<sup>1</sup> The flower of which conventionalized forms the Imperial crest.



in regard to plants could be given ; Japanese literature teems with them, for flowers are bound up in the lives and affections of every one, and even peasants make poems, or quote them. Here is an example : Prince Ota Dokwan, hunting in the mountains with his suite, was overtaken by driving rain. He stopped at a wayside inn to ask for the loan of one of the straw rain-coats the Japanese wear. The girl of whom the request was made went off, and returned greatly embarrassed without the coat and without an explanation, but with a Yamabuki blossom (a kind of yellow Rose) on her outstretched fan. The Prince was furious, and started away in a tremendous rage, when one of his followers interpreted the poor girl's action by quoting the verse by which her behaviour, a subtle apology, was prompted—

“The Yamabuki blossom has  
A wealth of petals gay ;  
But yet, in spite of this, alas !  
I much regret to say,  
No seed can it display,”

which by a play upon words really means, “The mountain flower herself has no rain-coat.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Nanae yae  
Hana wa sake domo  
Yamabuki no  
Mi no hitotsu dani  
Naka zo kanashiki.”

*A Hundred Verses from Old Japan*  
(W. N. PORTER)







GATEWAY OF SHANMO GARDENS  
NEAR TOKYO



Again, there is a fable (in a *Nō* play) of the Angel and the Pine Tree. An Angel (or 'Fairy,' as Mr. Chamberlain translates it) came to a Pine forest, and, for some reason not explained, hung her coat of feathers on one of the Pines and left it there while she climbed up a near-by mountain to look at Fujiyama. This show of æsthetic taste and praiseworthy confidence in man was hardly rewarded as it should have been, for she got back just in time to find a fisherman making off with the robe.<sup>1</sup> With great politeness she begged its return, as without her feathery garments she would not be able to fly back to her home in the moon. With an equal show of courtesy the fisherman promised to restore it to her if she would first dance for him. So, draped in her light and beautiful dress of feathers, beneath the great Pines on the sandy beach she pirouetted and floated, and at last, on fairy wings, disappeared into the evening sky.

Yet again, there is the story of the White Rose with a Red Centre. A beautiful princess loved the wrong man, so a Buddha turned her lovely white body into a pure white Rose, but her heart still beat red and warm for love of

<sup>1</sup> I can hardly credit this story, however well vouched for. In my many journeyings in Japan I have never yet had anything stolen, and in long rambling or sketching expeditions in the country we have all of us left coats, umbrellas, paints, and Japanese cushions half-way along our route to be called for on our way back, and they have never been disturbed.



the man for whose sake she suffered, and so to this day the flower keeps its deep red heart.

Some of the ideas connected with flowers, which are not legends, are often very charming. The Mimosa, for instance, is called *Nemu* ('The Sleeper'), as it shuts its leaves at a touch, and slumbers at night and until late in the spring. Maple leaves typify 'Changing Love.' A heartless beauty of the *Yoshiwara* (I do not believe that any other type of woman would do it, for cruelty and inconstancy are not traits of ordinary women in Japan) will sometimes send her lover a branch of the red leaves to signify that her affections have changed also. Prettier is the notion that a Maple leaf, five-fingered, delicately veined, resembles a baby's hand, and that a girl who blushes has 'scattered red leaves on her face.'

But there are legends, too, of the Maple, and Imperial ones at that. The Emperor Takakora-No-In had many of the trees which he loved planted at Kita-No-Jin, which he called Momiji Yama—that is, 'Mount Maple Tree.' Like many of us others, he loved to see the carpet of scarlet, bronze, and crimson leaves on the ground, and, perhaps, to shuffle through them with noisy feet, and so no gardeners were allowed to rake up or sweep away the fair matting that the night winds had laid down. But, alas! some gardener, incorrigibly neat, cleared them away—red leaves for the burning. The Emperor, luckily

for the culprit, bethought him of the famous lines of the poet, Ri-Tai-Ha-Ku, which go, in English—

“We'll warm our bodies gathering maple leaves,  
In turn those red boughs to the flames consign;  
And then we'll warm the *saké*, hot and sweet,  
To warm our Autumn hearts with the hot wine,”

and, naturally being pleased with his apposite-ness, he forgave the delinquent.

There is a Maple tree reported from Matsuora to have blushed like a girl in the midsummer, deliberately, to call forth the praise of the poet Chunagou Takasuke, and to have remained green as the Laurel ever after, having won her bays.

The Chrysanthemum (*Kiku*) is, in more ways than one, an emblem of Japan. Its many rays are like the rising sun—the Imperial flag and the national crest of the Emperor;<sup>1</sup> and its petals are also like the spokes in the wheel of life. But there is another reason why the flower has been chosen as the insignia of royalty. The wild Chrysanthemum is a straggling plant, of long fibrous stems, and is called *Kakura-no-Hana* (‘Bind-weed’ or ‘Binding Flower’) as the yellow blossoms are tied together in a bunch at the top; even so does the Mikado bind the separate lives and interests of his people into

<sup>1</sup> The national crest, or that of the Mikado as Emperor of Japan, is the Chrysanthemum. His personal crest is that of the *Paulownia imperialis*.

one golden head—the emblem of the sun itself. Also it is the ‘Flower of the Four Seasons,’ as it blooms at all times of the year, like Majesty. And, in the case of this particular monarch, his birthday is in the Chrysanthemum month—November. The flower typifies also, with its numerous petals, many years of a long life, hardiness, and courage. It is one of the *Sikunshi*, or ‘Four Floral Gentlemen,’ and is the nobleman of the group. Many are the legends that concern it.

That of the fair girl whose *maud* on her kimono was, like the Emperor’s, a Chrysanthemum, is beautifully told by Lafcadio Hearn. One day, she saw a handsome young samurai passing in the street; their eyes met; her heart went out to him; but he disappeared in the throng. After that, whenever she went out she wore that purple *kiku*-adorned kimono, in order that he should recognize her again if they met, and when she was at home she wept and prayed before it, and sighed her heart and finally her life out, in vain longings. After her death the beautiful robe was given as an offering to one of the temples, and by the priests sold four times, for each time it was returned because the wearer had died obsessed by the image of a handsome young knight. Then at last, at the temple, the haunted garment was solemnly set on fire. At the invocation (*Munu myo ho renga Kyo*) great sparks flew up that set fire to the temple, and, at last, to all Tokio.

The Chrysanthemum is supposed to make a fairy wine that is a drink of forgetfulness, which is the foundation of the Far Eastern version of Rip Van Winkle. Mr. Chamberlain tells it as follows<sup>1</sup>:—

“There is an old Chinese story of a peasant who, following up the banks of a stream, bordered with flowering Chrysanthemums, arrived at the mountain home of the elves and fairies. After spending a few hours feasting with them, and watching them play at checkers, he set out on his homeward route, but found, to his amazement, on reaching the spot whence he had set out, that more than seven hundred years had elapsed and that the village was now peopled by his own remote posterity.”

Another Chrysanthemum story, of the girl O Kiku, has already been given in the chapter on Wells, but the one I like best of all is that of the Chrysanthemum Promise:

Samon Hase, a scholar and samurai, entertained a perfect stranger to whom he offered a night's lodging. His guest, whose name was Soemon Akana, was suddenly taken ill in the night, and Samon nursed him until he was well again, the two becoming fast friends and sworn brothers. Soemon had to go back to his home

<sup>1</sup> He has also translated it into verse—from that rare thing in Japanese literature a long poem on the subject.

on business, but swore to return and pass the remainder of his days with his new brother, indicating the time of the Chrysanthemum Feast as the date of his return. The appointed day came, but up to sunset there were no signs of Soemon, and Samon was about to retire for the night when he saw a curious black shadow approaching swiftly under the moon. This was Soemon, who explained that he was dead, having killed himself, but, being under a bond to come on that day, he had redeemed his promise.

I like to think that this story shows the Japanese faith in keeping their word in a truer light than the conduct of merchants who have dealings with foreigners might suggest. The idea is the old knightly one that only death itself—and sometimes not even death—can hinder a man from keeping a promise, and, as such, the Chrysanthemum is a true emblem of Japan.

## CHAPTER XVII

### FLOWER FESTIVALS

"Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.—EMERSON

"'Tis not the gift which marks the festival,  
Nor lights nor garlands make the holiday,  
The happy mind in working is at play;  
Spring's herald-bird brings summer on its wing;  
The heart's the happy day's best madrigal."

NO country on earth has more poetic reasons for its holidays and fêtes than has Japan. If they are not deliberate rejoicings over the perfection of some flower—as in the case of the festivals of the Cherry, the Chrysanthemum, the Maple—they are so adorned by, and inextricably mixed with, the blooms of the day they celebrate that we can hardly distinguish between the offerings on the altar and the decorations there.

When Japan ceased to hold to her ancient calendar, and reckoned time no longer as China does, but as Western nations do, part of the meaning of these holidays disappeared. But, as the perfume of the blooms tells the poet that he is once more at his old home, although in the



darkness he cannot see the ancient Plum tree's shape beside the door,<sup>1</sup> so with infinite art and patience the prescribed flowers are forced for the earlier dates, and the fragrance of the old loved blossoms converts the new time into the familiar season.

The festival of the New Year in Japan really begins before the end of the old year. According to the new calendar, this celebration falls on December 13th, as the New Year is now celebrated, like that of the Western nations, on the first of January. *Koto Hajime* means 'The Beginning of Things,' but it ought to mean 'getting ready for the beginning of things,' unless the New Year is not the 'beginning,' but the thing accomplished, finished. It is like American College 'Commencements,'—it is the end of school, but the beginning of all that for which education has been fitting the student. If there is a pothole over the preparation for the closing of the schools in America and England, there is fuss enough over the preparation for the New Year in Japan. Such a pounding, all in time, as there is of rice for cakes—for the Oriental does his whipping of eggs for his omelette, his mashing of vegetables, and his beating of batter for pudding in a rhythmic cadence, as regular as that of castanettes or negro 'bones'—a kind of 'devil's tattoo.' It is almost as stimulating to the mind as the

<sup>1</sup> An idea from a well-known *tanka*.

fragrant scents from the kitchen are to the nostrils at a later stage of the proceedings. And how they scour and scrub and brush! A New England housekeeper at her house-cleaning orgies in the spring and autumn in Massachusetts can hardly be so thorough. For, to begin with, Japanese houses are so bare of adornments—lacking furniture, carpets, curtains, antimacassars, lamp mats, and what-nots—that the bed-rock business of cleaning *must* receive more attention even than in the mansion in Vermont. Then, when everything has been pounded or dusted or washed and set in the sun, and when, from soft-toned walls to new pale-hued mats (the fleas in the straw padding of the latter, however, I have reason to believe, after a refreshing beating only change quarters and hibernate in their soft nest to bide their time till spring), when inside and out all is fleckless and spotless—unless it be for glints of dull gilding on the sliding panels of the doors,—then the decorating begins.<sup>1</sup>

And so shall you find that on New Year's Eve all is ready for the great day. Around the pillars of the gateway a straw rope (*shimenawa*) will gracefully sway—god-evoking *gohei* on it. Besides the Pine tree, there already, more cut Pine branches will be put, to bring

<sup>1</sup> At the *Koto Hajime* presents of money are given the servants—who are invariably in the beautiful patriarchal way of Japan an integral part of the family.

health and strength and years to those who dwell inside; and golden oranges and ruddy 'mandarins' to ensure them wealth and prosperity; and perhaps a lobster, to signify the desire for old age ('crabbed age,' as Himself says) because of its crooked back. Other decorations there are, too, Bamboo sprays, Ferns perhaps, and Laurel leaves, sometimes vivid orange-coloured Marigolds (though this is rather a South China custom, where the flowers are more easily to be had at that time of year), and, last of all, dried fruits and nuts, persimmons and chestnuts, to ensure plenty and contentment for the year to come.

The two Pines at the gate are the most important, and after them the first week of the New Year is named the *Kodo Matsu* ('Gate Pines'), or *Matsu no Uchi* (or 'Within the Pines'). How they are placed, the male Pine on the side of honour, the left; the more light and delicate female Pine on the right, has been told in the chapter on Flower Arrangement, as also the custom of putting Pine boughs and Plum blossoms—or perhaps I had better say buds—on the *takenomos* at the New Year. Indeed, the Plum is as important as the Pine, and the two together might well signify youth and old age.

During many long months have careful gardeners been training and cultivating these miniature Plum trees, snipping, pruning, giving or withholding light and water, so that they may









W. H. T. Tyndal





come to perfection at the allotted hour, and all over the land the pretty, tender-blossomed miniature trees or larger branches are bought, to be sent or carried home as a token of the love and goodwill of the season. I have many fond associations with the thorny-leaved Holly, scarlet-berried; with the bronze branches of Mistletoe, with their milk-white fruit; but I like these fragile Plum blossoms almost better, with their sentiment of renewal of life out of the death of the Old Year; for that is what, in its essence, the New Year means in Japan—the lapse of winter, the first sighing breath (almost the agony of birth) of the spring.

The accompanying picture shows girls casting for gold-fish, which are caught only to be put back again uninjured—the game being to see who can get the most. It is a favourite sport at Atami at the season of the New Year.

Seven days after the festivities of the New Year are ended—which, by the old way of reckoning, had a meaning that is now almost lost—occurs the festival of the ‘Seven Herbs,’ the *Nana Kusa*, also called the *Setsubun*, ‘The Eve of the First Day of Spring.’

Red beans are an invariable accompaniment of all ceremonial feasting in Japan, and, cooked in many delicious ways, they make a dish at which the most carnivorous-minded man need not sneer. At the *Koto Hajime* also a stew of them is made, mixed with potatoes, sliced fish, mushrooms,

and a kind of tasty root called *Konuyaku*; but at the *Setsubun* the very demons are scared out of the house by the scattering of beans (full of virtue !) about. Each member of the household, from the master down to the scullery-maid, and not omitting the baby, must get rid of the foul fiends that possess them, by eating beans to a number at least greater than the years of their age.

On the third of March is one of the prettiest festivals of the year—that of the Dolls, the Little Girls, and the Peach Blossoms. It is called the *Jomi no Sekku* ('Little Girls' Fête'), or *Hina Matsuri* ('Dolls' Festival'). The Peach blossoms are not mentioned in the title, but the festival would lose half its charm if they were not to be had for its celebration, and due provision is made by the gardeners—if the season is stingy or backward—to ensure blooms at that time. On every *takenomo*, Momo branches are put in the ceremonial vase, and the great family of dolls, which makes its collected appearance on that day alone of the year, are set out in the special alcove on five shelves covered with strips of rich scarlet brocade. Such joy of colour there is—the flaming blossoms of the Peach, the gorgeous Venetian-rivalling brocade, the indescribable beauty and richness of the costumes of the dolls! They are not the everyday kind, with broken noses and entrails of hair, or streaming gore of sawdust protruding from a torn

side that we loved so in our youth ; nor yet the sort, blue-eyed and prim, in pale silk frock and bronze shoes which we kept in a cupboard, pretending we loved it so much that we wished to keep it from harm ; nor are they even of the sort we buy our own little daughters in Yokohama, with a stiff bowl-shaped fringe of black hair, and dainty little kimono and obi of gaudy silk. No, these are not common dolls—even the little Marquise from Paris is hardly exalted enough in rank to appear with the dolls of a Japanese girl on her National Birthday. These are Emperors, and eminent ancient Royalties, magnificently clothed princesses in the ceremonial costumes of old days. Jimmo Tenno, the first real Emperor, may be there, and Jingo, the Empress who was so great that she is put on the shelf with men monarchs, and not in the lesser place that is devoted to her own sex. Famous generals you may see: Hideyoshi, builder of palaces and of a nation ; court officials in flowing robes ; princesses with long loose hair ; samurai, with two swords ; and, last of all, obsequious servants to wait on the whole company. Then there may be the five court musicians with their quaint, perfectly made instruments ; and even *kagos* for carrying common folk, horses for samurai, and lacquer carts, drawn by bullocks, for Royalty to ride in.

Such a court of dolls I was shown in Kyoto

—a miniature pageant, the most wonderful collection.<sup>1</sup> As valuable heirlooms they are handed down for generations in a family, and sometimes, when a girl marries, she takes her own set to pass on to her little girl when she gets one. They are never broken or damaged, it would appear, for the Japanese show few signs of that wilful love of smashing things with which all the rest of the world seems cursed. Even flimsy, jerry-built toys, made for the foreign market, if possessed by a Japanese child are taken care of and guarded heedfully.

Of course all little girls do not own such grand and impressive dolls as those I have described; these would be only for higher-class maidens, who, by means of the puppets, are taught the involved and elaborate ceremonial of the Court. No disrespect is permitted towards the doll dignitaries; they are as if endowed with life. A little girl who did not behave as she ought in the Imperial presence would be in danger of being turned into a lizard, or perhaps a horrid writhing snake! Court-table manners are also taught them, with those dainty, almost

<sup>1</sup> It should be added that, while children of the nobility and samurai class were allowed these wonderful collections of dolls, which have been handed down to the present day, according to the sumptuary laws established in the year A.D. 681, by the Emperor Temmu, the number and value of even the dolls a little girl might receive on her birthday were strictly regulated. For instance, a farmer assessed at 10 *koku* of rice (which would imply an income of £9 or £10 a year) could give his daughter only "one paper doll or one 'mud doll' a year," and a boy only one toy spear.

priceless, little dishes of gold lacquer, old silver, or fragile porcelain. The small maiden owner receives grown-up as well as younger guests on that day, and gives them tea—the thick, horrid ceremonial sort usually—and minute cakes, with pink sugar Peach blossoms on top.

Every little girl in the land, even if her parents are too poor to provide dolls for her on this festival, has a Peach blossom to sniff at and to set up in the *takenomo*—a real one usually, but at least a paper one, and that so perfectly made that it would deceive any but the elect. Another pink bloom adorns the glossy black hair, and probably the dainty kimono shows the flowers all through its graceful folds of *crêpe*, or its glowing colour in lining or in obi. So the day may as well be called the ‘Peach Festival’ as the ‘Little Girls’ Birthday’ or the ‘Dolls’ Fête.’

March the 17th and the next six days following are the Buddhist equinoctial festival of *Higan*, most important to all those who love gardens. On the day of the equinox the sun is supposed to whirl round and round at sunset. Perhaps it does, but, as the Japanese sky is usually dark with rain at that time, one cannot say for certain.

April the 8th is Buddha’s birthday, and this, like the *Koto Hajime*, is celebrated as if its scene were New England, by cleaning houses and systems of the supposed-to-have-been-pent-



up poisons and impurities of winter—a kind of purification of the soul by means of the cleansing of the body and of all places where both are housed. In temple grounds, in the streets, in private shrines, little images of the infant Buddha are set up, as, in Catholic countries, the figure of the Christ-Child is seen at Christmas. But then comes the odd part: liquorice tea in an open jar is set beside these images, and from time to time is poured over the figure with a ladle. This tea is bought by all and taken home to drink,—to ‘kill worms,’ they say,—and is set at the corners of the house to prevent ants and other insects from coming in. Sometimes favourite trees in the garden get a dose of this germicide, less to make them holy than to ward off the creepy, crawly things that love them not more wisely, but as well as the owners.

In April the many feasts of Cherry-viewing begin. Some time about the middle or third week in the month, when the Cherry blossoms are at the height of their beauty in Tokio, the Emperor’s far-famed garden-party to view the flowers is held.<sup>1</sup> This is the show affair of the year. All the Court are there, the Emperor and royal princes dignified in spite of their foreign frock-coats or uniforms aglitter with

<sup>1</sup> This festival was inaugurated in the ninth century (of our era) by the Emperor Sago. It still occurs annually—of late years in the garden of the old summer palace of the Shoguns, Shiva Kikyu.

gold lace, which assort so ill with the freshness of the Cherry trees in bloom.

Yes, they are imposing, it is true, for dignity is the stuff that is in a man, not on him ; but as much cannot be said for many of the Japanese nobility and gentry, who are forced, by Imperial Edict if not by inclination, to ape the foreigner in the most hideous garb known to civilized man (I do not even exclude that of the Korean)—the silk hat, frock-coat, and striped tubular trousers of the Western world—in place of the beautiful, low-toned, heavy silks, of the graceful, yet imposing, ceremonial garb of their own land ; while on feet accustomed to the foot-freedom of spotless white *tabi*, and *geta* of the most exquisitely wrought bamboo, are forced stiff, ugly, and unyielding patent leather boots.

And the ladies—the dear, demure little ladies—are cheapened, vulgarized almost beyond recognition, by the adoption of stays, of frilled and furbelowed dresses from Vienna or Paris, instead of the subdued richness of their own graciously revealing lines of kimono and obi ! Big hats and feathers conceal the glossy black hair and pretty coiffure of the old days, and the whole outrageous garb turns them from sweet and charming Japanese ladies into objects of only slightly superior Eurasian aspect. Japanese men often look extremely well in foreign dress, but the women almost never do.

All this, at the most poetic of outdoor fêtes,

is truly heart-rending. Trousers and ham sandwiches take away all the poetry of the poetically inspired festival; wooden fences keep the *hoi polloi* from the enclosure of Royalty; champagne and claret cup are served in place of the prescribed *saké*; and, instead of writing verses to hang on the grey, rose-clouded branches, a crowd of tired, blasé foreigners, "who have not spent a year in Japan," and of Japanese—yearning for the comfort of kimonos—wander dejectedly about, wondering if it will be over in time to catch the five o'clock train back to Yokohama.

How different if the Feast of the Cherry-viewing is confined to their own people, done in their own way!—the whole nation out for the day (and no 'benk 'olidi' sort, either) and *en fête*, the flowers divinely beautiful. Then all Japan is half child and half poet, as always at heart—only on this day they let themselves go. Wherever the trees are (and where are they not?) there are crowds of happy, but not boisterously happy, people in holiday attire, walking about and gazing at the blossoming trees,—for in this land there are no warnings to 'keep off the grass.' There is but little grass, to be sure, but it is not that that makes the difference. There are brightly draped little booths, erected near all the finest view-places, where tea and *saké* and little cakes, stamped or iced in the image of the festal bloom,

can be had ; and there are sprays of the blooms for sale—real ones that seem artificial, they are so perfect, and artificial ones that seem real, for the same reason ; and toys, and little lanterns, all reminiscent of the Cherry flower. And still are verses in praise of the blossoms hung on the boughs in the old-time way, written by anyone—the man in the street, perhaps.

The Boys' Festival, on the fifth of May (the Fifth Day of the Fifth Moon, as they put it), might be called, although somewhat erroneously, the Iris Festival, for they are plants sacred to that day and the boy. The Shobu (*Acorus spurius*, or Sweet Flag) is so often confused with the Kakitsubata (*Iris lœvigata*), that even well-informed people think them the same plant. The Iris is a water plant, the Sweet Flag, or Shobu, a land one, but they seem to appear near each other wherever they grow. Both plants have long, pointed leaves, which suggest the blade of a sword, the boys' chosen weapon, and is the insignia of these would-be samurai. The Iris, however, can hardly be called fragrant, while the Sweet Flag is, I believe, the source of Orris root, and is as delicately sweet as Violets. On that day, as I have told in the chapter on Folk-Lore and Legends, Shobu are put in all the baths, are steeped and drunk in tea and *saké*, and are tied in sheaves from the roofs of houses. In old days the boys wore wreaths of Shobu stems,

where now the German military cap is seen. They made ropes of the twisted, long, tough-fibred leaves, and used them to skip and dance with; and wove them into flags, to beat the ground with, to scare away goblins and demons and all prowling evil spirits from their festival.

The fish is also the boys' emblem, and what glorious fish they are!—great painted cloth or waxed paper things, streaming out from the tops of high bamboo poles. I shall never forget Nagasaki, with its waving forest of brilliant fish flags plunging and bellying in the breeze, and the boys marching like soldiers, with all their martial spirit aroused, and all their play-soldier games and decorations brought out. I love boys anywhere,—unless they are too good, and this they certainly are not in Japan,—scamps and rascals all, bright-eyed and impudent, yet polite, eager, impetuous, warlike, and surely the carp which can fight its way upstream is a fit symbol for them.

There are several festivals connected with Rice,—at its planting, at various stages of its growth, and at the time of its harvest,—and these are celebrated every year by the peasant and farmer people all over Japan. Never before the year 1910 has any one of these occasions been observed outside Japan, but at the Anglo-Japanese Exhibition at Shepherd's Bush, on the 28th August of that year, the festival of the Rice Harvest was celebrated,



and offerings to the goddess Annomozi-Inazi were made.<sup>1</sup>

The festival of the *Bon*, or 'Feast of Lanterns,' which occurs from the 13th to 16th of August, is the 'All Souls' Day' of Japan. To this the Pæony, though it is not then in bloom,—so that one might consider it as but the ghost of a Pæony,—is dedicated. It is curious that this lusty, buxom, flaunting flower should, on every lantern, every lighted float and illuminated shrine, be the one chosen to typify the dead, or the returned soul of the dead. Of course the Lotus also is there, for this is a Buddhist as well as a Shinto Holy Day, and the spirit food is set out in Buddhist fashion on Lotus leaves. Models of spirit horses and oxen are also supplied—images made of straw, or perhaps of vegetables. A cucumber with four pegs stuck in it simulates a horse; an egg-plant, with wooden or bamboo legs, is the usual type of an ox. White lanterns are lit at the grave itself, coloured ones at the gateways of houses, to illuminate the coming and going of the visiting dead. A ghost can find its way back to its own home and haunts by

<sup>1</sup> There is a goddess also of the Rice Pot—O-Kama-Sama—worshipped in the kitchen. It should be remarked that the local gods are those usually invoked in these Shinto rites, and that they differ in name and character in different places. Lafcadio Hearn, in *Japan, an Interpretation*, says: "It is not to the Buddhas that the farmer prays for bountiful harvests, or for rain in time of drought; it is not to the Buddhas that thanks are rendered for a plentiful rice-crop; but to the local god."



means of the Pæony which decorates the lantern set out to welcome its return.

I have seen the festival of the *Bon* a number of times, but never in so perfect a way as I did a year ago at Hakone. We had travelled from Yokohama in burning heat on the 16th of August, and had had an interminable ride, on rough-gaited Japanese horses, up the pass from Yumoto, past Miyanoshita, to our village beside the lake. We had been on the go all day, and I was so tired that I could hardly sit up in the saddle; while the poor horses, after ten or twelve miles of rough, uphill work, stumbled along dully. It was pitch dark at the top of the mountain pass when we began to descend, and just then—when we first caught sight of the lake—a fairy pageant passed before our eyes. A fleet of tiny, sparkling lights—for it seemed as if each one sent out the prescribed number of a hundred and eight welcoming fires—set in spirit ships (*shoryobune*) swept in a long line across the lake. Faintly, weirdly floated upwards the sound of music—wild and curious music, a march of the dead—from a lighted boat that followed. In an unbroken line the ships of souls, launched to return the ancestor spirits to the under world, glided out across the dark water, lay still, and then, one by one, the lights went out. Of all the hundreds, three, bravely burning, alone were left; and



remained for 2 years before the second observation was made.

After some time intervals in May 1981, a further 10 cases, four before the outbreak of the 1982-83 epidemic and six during it, were followed through blood sampling, during part of the time of hospitalization and some on admission after a long-term hospitalization. The first four cases were the first, the last two were the 10th and 11th in order from 1 until finally all six of the patients shown in Table 1 were followed. The first two patients died of hepatic coma, without relapsing, while the other four were at the end of the incubation period when the first 10 cases were first observed, remaining hospitalized at the Tokyo Infectious Disease Hospital until the end of the 1982-83 epidemic period, and then, a few of them, including patient No. 1, returned to their native districts by a railway to 10 other cities and the epidemic continued in a sporadic, but high, manner, with all of eight major outbreaks occurring in a long time after the first epidemic. Patient No. 1 returned to his home in Osaka with his mother and went to work in a small factory. A few days after his return, he got sick and died. The next 10 cases were followed in several circumstances, except in two cases where patients had spent the whole outbreak period in hospital and were discharged after the epidemic. The 10th and 11th cases, however, having been seen 10th and





then the clouds swept across the desolate sky, the mists fell, and we were left scrambling stupidly among the rocks again, and in a land of shadows. The vision was gone.

There are other festivals, of which I have not space to speak—that of the Autumn Equinox; that of the Seamstresses on the Seventh Night of the Seventh Moon, when the Bamboo is the votive plant, and the star Vega is adored and invoked by all, down to the babies; that of the Housewives, later on in October; and, in November, several Shinto festivals, or *matsuri*. In that month also comes the Fête of Chrysanthemums (*Kiku-no-Sekku*, the ‘Ninth Day of the Ninth Moon’), when the Emperor gives a garden-party, like in all ways to that of the Cherry Blossoms, to view the pots of autumn flowers. I have never had the good fortune to see it, but my parents and sister told me that, bar the interest attending a foreign party and an unfamiliar crowd of people, the flowers were no better than, if as good as, those at Chrysanthemum shows at home.

Last of all the year, and best of all in some ways, is the Maple-viewing, the feast of the Maple leaves.<sup>1</sup> Then all the world makes holiday outdoors again for the last time; up and down the mountain slopes the people go in swarms, climb rugged hill paths, descend rocky valleys, to admire, near and afar off,

<sup>1</sup> See Frontispiece.



the glory of the dying Maples. Hot *saké* warms their blood, and the blazing leaves their hearts. Our artist told me that he nearly froze to death while painting the Maples, but I can scarce believe it when I see the glowing pictures ; it seems as though one could almost warm one's stiff and aching fingers at the open fire of the trees.

This is, after all, but a bald statement of the festivals of Japan, because the day hardly passes in which is not celebrated somewhere or in some way the gracious gifts of Nature, or in which the invisible and benign gods, who exist for the Japanese in every manifestation of life, are not invoked by rites of sacrifice, or worshipped in some outward act of rejoicing. These people have been taught since the earliest recorded era to hold constant communion with the unseen forces of Nature. Ideas which are strange and novel to us are commonplaces—if such things can ever be that—to them. Everything visible and material has its unseen spirit ; no humblest tool, no agricultural pursuit, no trade, no profession, but is sanctified by the thought of a guardian deity being a part of it. No house or temple is built, according to their strict laws, without prayers and a calling down of a ghostly blessing upon every part of it, to the very beams and the plaster. The mason's trowel, the carpenter's saw, the artist's brushes, the writer's pens—and above all his unblemished

paper—are dedicated. Nothing is too humble, too lowly in its own sphere of usefulness, to be without its patron saint. The broom, by this, becomes a symbol; the very cooking utensils are altar vessels; and the glowing coals of the *hibachi*, sacred fire.

Lafcadio Hearn tells us in regard to customs of old days—still observed in the remoter country places—that

“Gardens, too, were holy, and there were rules to be observed in their management, lest offence be given to the gods of trees and flowers. . . . The trees were haunted and holy; even the rocks were endowed with conscious life.”

With this constant, almost daily, ceremonial and rejoicing over the outward forms of Nature to its inmost spirits, it may easily be seen that the fêtes and *matsuri* I have mentioned but brush the fringe of the subject.

Attention, too, in Japan, is paid to the national holidays of other countries, more especially in the Treaty Ports. I never saw more beautiful fireworks or street decoration in the United States than in Yokohama on the several Fourths of July I have spent there. Nor was it done by the foreigners in the Settlement alone, by any means. The street of native shops—*Benten Dori*—was decorated

from end to end with exquisitely made vines of paper Wistaria, which, in their delicate waving grace and colours, quite put to shame the garish flags and gaudy streamers of the foreign quarter.

But there the secret of the whole thing lies. The festival is not all in noise and dangerous play and fire-crackers. I, an American, think that the Japanese celebrate our Independence Day better than we ourselves do, for theirs is a manifestation of the spirit—a kindliness and courtesy that sympathizes with us in a patriotic sentiment. I cannot help thinking that ours would be more real if it too came from the heart, and did not at every street corner encroach on the rights of others, their feelings, and their claims to safety.

But we can all learn something. England's Bank Holidays and Eastern 'Race Weeks,' Europe's ante-Lenten Carnivals and New Year's festivities, as well as America's 'Terrible Fourth' and Labour Day, can take from the Japanese, if their movers will, points on the simple joy of celebration; from days spent, not in boisterous picnicking, in tedious street parades, gambling, or unhealthy gaiety, but in intimate communion with that which is cleanest and most serene, sanest and sweetest in the world—Nature.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE FOUR SEASONS OF FLOWERS

#### I. SPRING

“Spring, spring has come, while yet the landscape bears  
Its fleecy burden of unmelted snow!  
Now may the zephyrs gently 'gin to blow,  
To melt the nightingale's sweet frozen tears.

Too lightly woven must the garments be—  
Garments of mist that clothe the coming spring,—  
In wild disorder, see them fluttering,  
Soon as the zephyr breathes adown the lea!”

BASIL HALL CHAMBERLAIN  
(From *Classical Poetry of the Japanese*)

OUT of the ugliness of pain beauty may spring,—the child from the travail and suffering of his mother; the picture from that of the artist; the poem, the great book from the hardly-caught, anguish-snatched inspiration, wrought in labour, of its author,—and out of the storm and frost, and the painful melting of winter, spring.

With each birth there must also be love, the courage, the persistency of love, which faces the torture of production, that the child of the

heart, of the imagination, may be born into the world. Without love there is no miracle, without suffering there can be no splendour of beauty. The artist who creates as a hen lays an egg attracts us no more to his work than the hen by her frenzied cackling does to hers. And as without love all is naught, so, without the ardours and anguishes of the soul, is all useless. The spring that is not wrenched painfully from the lap of winter, the spring that follows languidly and tamely after the heat and greenness of a tropic season, has lost much that makes it dear. What we gain in ease of attainment is forfeited in delight—the high, sharp edge that is suffering and joy in one.

In Japan the suffering almost overbears the joy. The spring comes and is gone again, the bitter cold is back, the biting wind, the sullen ache of the chill air. The swelling buds are pinched, the frost grips them and bids them wait; and even when, a little kinder, he bids them open, the winter, jealous of the white flowers of the Plum, may send an envious snow-storm to rival the fallen petals.

As early as January the Plum blossoms begin to appear. First the fragile, frightened-looking white ones; then the healthier, less wraith-like, creamy ones; and last of all those of pearly pink, pure pink, and even hardy crimson. Of course these are out of doors; already, from New Year's Day onward, there have been the forced blooms



in jars for the place of honour on the *takenomo*, where the 'Three Friends of Winter'—the Plum, the Bamboo, and the Pine—appear together.

The Plum-blossom Viewing is, with the Japanese people, almost a sacrament. To it is brought none of the rather boisterous joy and merriment of the Cherry-blossom Feast. Nor is it wholly because of the cold, which to them is as nothing when under the spell, the emotion, of the hour. Huddled up in their wadded kimonos, drinking hot tea and *saké* at the pretty little booths always erected for the purpose near the groves of trees, or rubbing numb and aching hands over the glowing coals of a *hibachi*, they care nothing for the temperature; for the awe of earth's awakening, the wonder and amazement of the yearly miracle, is upon them. Even the children are touched by the sense of mystery, it would seem, and their usual strenuous gaiety is subdued. They look at their little brother the Spring in hushed astonishment.

The father whose newborn child is placed in his arms regards it with pride, with tenderness, with yearning, and with some possible dislike, but with wonder always. This is *his* child, *his own*, who has drawn down into the shadow of death the woman he loves, and for whom the woman he loves made the sacrifice gladly and thankfully.

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our Home."



The halo is still about the infant brow. So the Year holds its breath, is afraid to speak aloud, for fear this wonderful thing, this child of its begetting, may slip away again to the darkness from which it came. We become less fearful as the days go on, the times grow lusty, and awe gives place to delight.

Spring is everywhere a well-loved time, as a thousand poets have testified. Even in Hong-Kong, where it comes as boldly and as flauntingly, in autumn clothing, as an Eastern queen; even in Singapore and Manila, where it drags itself in tiredly after heat; even in the grimmest Northern town, smoke-obsured and foul, the young, timid grass that peers up from the rough edges of pavements, the small, misshapen trees, hopefully green, bring the message of youth and gladness. But in Japan it is the most rapturous, enchanting time, ethereally, earthily beautiful; of soft, misty, tender-coloured skies; of sudden tears and of as sudden sunlight; laughing, coaxing, teasing, elusive—joyously and exuberantly young.

In February the Plum blooms on, and the Camellias—small double pink ones, big single red ones, pure waxy white ones, and those which, they say, resemble a decapitated head when they fall off—appear in crowds. Indeed, the Camellia goes on pretty well throughout the cold season—from November to March—and might almost be called, like

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the Chrysanthemum, 'The flower of the Four Seasons.'

Early March sees the Plum blossom ended, and the Peach blossom arrive—the flower dedicated to girls. The hills that have had the real snow on the ground, and the flower-snow in the air and on the trees, have lost the white to gain the green. The world is broad awake now, and birds are twittering. Daphnes, pink and white, have come, and pink Forsythias, and the fluffy golden balls of *Edgeworthia papirifera*, from which Japanese tough-fibred paper is made, and a multitude of little plants the spring brings to other lands. The Peach boughs flaunt their fiery signals, and the Cherry blossoms are beginning to cloud the sheltered groves of silver-grey trees, as if rosy mists lay low upon them. One may follow the Cherry blossoms, as I used to do strawberries when I was a child, from South to North, and get them at their best for many weeks, from Nagasaki to Chuzenji, or, longer yet, to Hakodate.

April sees the new shafts of Bamboo come up, like fairy telescopes to look at the stars of Sakura, the Cherry. The Columbine's elfin bugles, loved wild flower of my youth, appears, and Cypripedium, wild Lily of the Valley, and Violets galore. And before the Sakura has vanished, towards the last weeks of April, the tree Pæony has begun. Like the Cherry it flowers in many shades of pink, and even in crimson. Simul-

taneously, and later too, appear the forced kind of splendid curves and colours grown in flower-pots.

Then comes the floral month of May, when no artist can paint fast enough—so Mr. Tyndale says—to hope to show on his canvas one-half of the flowers which Nature so prodigally lavishes on the year.

Cherry blossoms are scarce fading before Azaleas are ready to carry on the rich harmonies of colour; and as a passionate love *motif* begins to weave itself into the end of a symphony's movement before we get it presented in all its full splendour of great crashing notes and full-gathered chords in its final evolution, so the Azaleas begin suavely in shadowy mauve blooms before the gorgeous climax of their scarlet, orange, crimson, and snow-white blossoms bursts forth. Like love, again, the Azaleas linger long, painting the hill-sides from early in May, at Kyoto, well into August at Nikko and Chuzenji. Oh! the fire of the red ones, and the fragrance of the white ones, and the beauty of them all! Barbarian that I am, I like these flowers best, but the subtle-minded Japanese prefers the Wistaria, which comes as early but does not last so long.

But is anything lovelier? As I look back on the bowers of pale purple blooms that I have known, I hesitate. When I think of an old gate, decked as if for a bridal arch, with

delicately fashioned, pure white blossoms, I hesitate still more. And the exquisite bean-blossom fragrance of them !

Never was a falser statement made than that the flowers of Japan have no fragrance. All the species that have perfume in other countries are even sweeter here. Wistaria, Azalea, all the many Lilies are rich in delicious scent, while Plum and Cherry, wild Apple and Peach have something more than the sweet pungent odour they offer in other lands. Magnolias, in Kyoto, have the mystic fragrance, half religious, half sensual, that they have in Virginia. Woods, banks, and hill-sides in Japan are often as heavily sweet as Easter churches at home.

Of the last named, April's flower and May's, Sir Francis Piggott has a pretty simile : " Magnolia trees, leafless as yet, with blossoms standing up like great candles which seem to make the daylight linger and live longer in the night."

In May, or April in the South, in Wistaria-time, comes also the Pæony, the small sort, cultivated in pots. This is one of the various China-New-Year flowers in Hong-Kong, but it was too flauntingly Chinese to appeal to me very much (although its pink and white and deep red blooms are as splendid as befits the ' Rich Man's Flower '), until Mr. Tyndale's poetic presentation of it (see page 234) put it in its transformed light as a Japanese flower.

Irises one sees in May, and well into June. At Hakone I know peasants' gardens where they may be found in late July, and even in August. Adorably, fragilely perfect things, are not *they* best of all? I remember a faultless group of them on the banks of an ugly little stream on the road to Kurihama, Perry's landing-place. They were fluttering, like true flags, in a wind which was sharp enough to tear into rags the silk gossamer texture of their petals, but which left them uninjured. They were planted and tended by peasants, but no millionaire, with a staff of highly paid gardeners, could have had more exquisite specimens. There were pale blue ones, delicate as a misty April sky; and rosy mauve ones, like a flushing Western one; there were Quaker-garbed blooms, silvery grey and white ones, thin and crinkled like almost transparent silk. These plants must have been lovingly as well as judiciously looked after, for Irises of such perfection are most difficult things to grow. With infinite affection, but, alas! without scientific knowledge, I have never been able to persuade those I have had from Japan to do anything, and even scientific growers, who have not perhaps the necessary love for them, have been disappointed in the same way. They are nowhere else so beautiful as in Japan. Near Yokohama, in a shallow valley, there is a vast field of them. The picture facing page 194, although not



painted there, but nearer Kyoto, gives an idea of them. A tiny silver ribbon of a stream slips zigzag down among them, and doubles the beauty of those near enough to be reflected in it; fluttering their silken flags, with leaves like swords high in air, they fill the place like a fairy army. Irises usher in the summer.

## II. SUMMER

“Like strips of cloth laid down to bleach,  
Snow-white in moonlight lie  
The Deutzia bushes by the path  
For summer’s finery.”

So says the poet, and his acclaimed flower is the great white mark of June in the mountains—the broad white stripe that distinguishes the first-class compartment.

Spring is the favoured first-born of the year, and has the most wealth of bloom, as his entail from the Father Year. But summer, well-beloved second son, has a rich inheritance also, from his mother Nature. Even those fragrant blossoms rightfully accruing to spring, Azaleas and Irises, in the Northern parts and in the mountain altitudes creep into summer’s lap. Here, in my garden in Hong-Kong, bewildered by the heat coming before the rains, as it has done this year, my Japanese Azaleas, snow-white, amber, orange, and carmine, are adorning September with flowers; yet no bait of double



daily waterings could lure them out in the fierce unusual heat of spring.

June should be as full of Irises as of rain. Honeysuckle, coral and white, lap over from May; and Spiræa in varying shades, from untinged white to nearly a crimson—so deep is the pink froth of flower, and so red the intricate pattern of branch and stem—are seen all the summer, and even into the early autumn. I sprained a shoulder gathering it, and nearly broke my neck besides, climbing up a slippery, friable, red hill-side after it at Ashinoyu. Under any name I love it—its proper botanical nomenclature, its stately lady-name ‘Veronica’; or as the homely ‘Meadow Sweet’ I called it as a child. Another home flower decks this full time of the year—Clematis. There is a big-bloomed purple kind, much like our New England south-porch favourite, which is called *Clematis florida*; and another, the wild sort, except for a difference in the shape of the leaves is almost exactly the same as that which clambers so gracefully over stone walls and grey fences, whose starry white blooms mingle so happily with the deep red berries of the Choke-cherry in Massachusetts. Its fluffy seed-vessels, which give it the ugly name of ‘Old Man’s Beard,’ have rather longer filaments than at home, however.

The Bignonia blazes brightest at mid-summer, the epitome of the summer’s sunshine,

so yellow that it is orange, like sunset on fairy horns of brass. Mr. Tyndale's picture facing page 92 shows a tea-house roof, gay with *Bignonia grandiflora*, a luxuriance of waving vine that recalled the ruins of the Residency at Lucknow to me—for Japan's sun in July is like India's in January. But his picture was painted at the end of June in Kyoto, as the season there is three weeks earlier than in the part I know best near Yokohama.

In June, and until late in the autumn, the wild Hydrangeas bloom in every hedgerow. Besides the bright blue which every one knows, and which is so much grown in pots with us, there is another (*H. hortensia*, va *japonica*), which is greenish-white in the centre, with purple flowers like a halo around the edge. Another (*H. virens*) has hard, round blue balls in the centre, with florets at the edges of pale blue fading to white, and even into a kind of rusty pink. It is rather coarse, but most effective, and in bud both are very striking looking, for the whole flower-head appears like a round green 'snowball.' The prettiest ones of all are the graceful, slender-stemmed, white Hydrangeas, which we were never tired of gathering, although, in spite of slitting the stems, they drooped so soon in water. These were often varied by pink florets, and in under the great Cryptomeria trees, on the paths near

Miyanoshita, I have found them of a deep carmine.

The lovely Deutzia bells have ceased ringing as the Hydrangeas begin to appear, but long before the latter are finished the various Lilies—big temple bells—have come to take the place of the Deutzia's fairy chimes. I never got used to those wonderful Lilies of Japan. My heart simply stopped beating the first time I saw, on a wild, rough hill-side above the sea, the splendid, stately blooms, standing up like royalty over the humbler flowers in the grass. No, surely Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these! And that these kings of the plant world should appear thus in all their rich state garments, crowned and sceptred, without a Court to set off their glory! . . . I saw whole fields of our Easter or Madonna Lilies (*L. longiflorum*), pure and white, bathed in the sunshine of an August day; I saw hill-sides, rugged and coarse with Bamboo grass, glorified with gold-patterned *Lilium auratum*; rocky cliffs above the bay at Dzushi, where they climbed fearlessly, but I dared not follow; I saw the crimson-spotted *Lilium speciosum rubrum*, atilt in a scrambly waste, unconscious of the price their blooms would fetch in New York or London; the orange Day Lily (*Hemerocallis fulva*), on peasants' roof-trees; *L. Krameri*, pink and flawless as a Court beauty, cuddled like a gipsy under a

Bamboo hedge ; Tiger Lilies, burning in a jungle, as if they were the beast, not the blossom ; and blood-red *L. elegans*, like a great ruby dropped from a crown, glowing serenely in the ditch that drained a paddy-field. It was always a miracle. Like every new baby, each one was an individual, a solemn and beautiful gift, straight from God.

That the Japanese themselves do not value and admire Lilies is another of the fallacies so often repeated, which no one has ever taken the trouble to dispute. One of the first writers on the flora of Japan made the rash statement that her flowers had no perfume, her birds did not sing, and—but I will not repeat the third. I have heard it quoted and requoted *ad nauseam*, and on one occasion by a friend who was walking beside me as I carried homeward through the woods, lyric with birds' voices, a sheaf of Lilies almost overpoweringly sweet. So the tale goes on that, because the Japanese love so deeply the subtle, poet-sung blossoms of Plum, Wistaria, Cherry, and Iris, they disdain those more obvious beauties of their fields and hill-sides ; that they eat the roots of their *Lilium auratum* ; *ergo*, they cannot love or admire them. Yes, and also do they eat the roots of the sacred Lotus and the young shoots of Bamboo, and yet no one suggests that *these* are not regarded and honoured. I have seen peasants by the tens, and small boys by the dozens, carrying home those same Lilies

carefully, to decorate their homes. And furthermore, I have seen them exalted in the sacred niche, the honourable altar of the house, in many, many humble homes. A fine old Japanese gentleman at the Yokohama Nursery told me that the *Auratum* Lily is cultivated for its flowers as well as for its edible bulb; but it is only the bulb more or less worn out by age that is eaten, when it is past its prime, and its flowers are not such as it produced in earlier years. Also it provides a bigger dish, with just as good a flavour as that of the smaller ones. Like the darkie saying about Hyacinth bells, the Japanese believe that for each year there is a new flower on the old stalk.

August is the month of Lotus flowers, as Japan is the land of them. At dawn, on dreaming moat and lake, their *réveillé* salute of opening buds is sounded. Hardly longer than the much loved *Convolvulus* blooms do they last, for a day sees the height of their perfection of shape and line, and then the petals fall, to show, like the other favourite, a seed-pod of a design as richly decorative, as gracefully shaped, as the flower. For both these poetry-inspired plants will the Japanese (and even some foreigners) get up an hour before day—when the day comes very early—to catch, at the hallowed moment of transformation, the opening blossoms. Kofu is famous for its Lotuses—the great Castle moat is starred white with them, as in the picture











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facing page 116, while in the Public Gardens there are lovely pink- and carmine-tipped ones, as shown facing page 212.

At this time of year, too, the flora of Fujiyama is more than beautiful, and most prodigal. Here we find all sorts of Alpine flowers, prominent among which is the lovely *Actæa spicata* with its raceme of white flowers, as well as a host of Anemones.

### III. AUTUMN

“Faded the clover now, sere and withered the grasses;  
What dreams the *matsumushi* in the desolate autumn fields?

Strangely sad, I thought, sounded the bell of evening;  
Haply that tone proclaimed the night in which autumn  
dies!

Viewing the autumn moon, I dream of my native village,  
Under the same soft light,—and the shadows about my  
home.”

LAFCADIO HEARN

On invisible feet slips the stately autumn into summer's place. Something has come to the air, a hint of change, some glory which cannot be defined into the sky and the leaves. Perhaps it has rained, and the languid, burning heat of the day before has now a sparkle in it; as hot, it may be, but alive, vivid. Perhaps it comes with a chill wind at evening, when faithful little Matsu, sent with coats and a lantern from the hotel to find us, is very welcome. Or it may be that at dawn one feels

too cold to get up and look at a mother-o'-pearl Fuji, rising from and repeated in the lake, but draws over one the heavy wadded *futon* instead.

The flowers are at first the same. Lilies linger, the sharp little red tongues of Nerine are not yet stuck out mockingly from the brown earth. They await the time of the equinox, when, like goblin fires, they may burst wickedly from the dark soil. Campanulas, which all through August have rung their bells as constantly as church chimes I wot of in Cuba, peal on in fairy joy into September, and even October. Spiræa is never done fringing the roadsides, it would seem, and Hydrangeas go on heroically, with almost a Spartan stoicism. And there are still Orchids, a dainty little pink one (*Spiranthes australis*), which sets its tiny flowers in a spiral around its stalks, wreathed like a maypole. Crape Myrtle, or the Monkey Box shrub (*Lagerstræmia indica*) still blooms, white and a deep old rose, on its trim little trees;<sup>1</sup> while Bignonia, with orange trumpets, which is the true flower of August, bugles long into September. Even Spider Wort, whose blue is so easily extracted that it is used for dyeing, and to symbolize fickle love, is constant in the mountains to the season, and has to be driven away by autumn's chilliest looks.

<sup>1</sup> A small specimen of this may be seen in the Hakone Garden in Chapter VI. page 82.



But with that coquette's cold glances the leaves blaze into fire—a consuming passion of love. The Sumach and its kin, the various sorts of Lacquer trees, are aflame first; but beware of breaking their glowing branches to carry home to warm your *takenomo*, for the juice may poison you, and bring out a horrid red rash. Then creepers, one after another, are lighted up like strings of lanterns at an evening fête. The Virginia Creeper is the best, and wreathes the *Cryptomeria* trunk with scarlet and deep crimson. The Japanese think that this plant steals the blood from the sacred tree, so near the ground the stem is cut, and the vine above is left to die out in ineffectual fire.

On sweeps September. The hills are pinky silver with that loveliest of grasses *Eulalia japonica*. Hazel bushes and Birches have taken on a luminous pale gold, and Asters, by the path, spell Autumn in their starry blooms. Dozens of other *Compositæ* have appeared, Michaelmas Daisies, Arnica, pale blue Scabious, wild Geranium, and tiny straggling wild Pinks, Toad Flax, Lespedeza or Indigo dressed in mauve and rose colour, and a Gentian, not much unlike that which was the prize of September in my American childhood's day. Monkshood or Aconite, regally, superbly blue, is everywhere; the mere naming of it is a delight, recalling the happy hours spent in gathering its blossoms or sketching among them in

the richest flower land I have ever known.<sup>1</sup> Glorious Campions, fiery red, there may be, too, before the Maples, with the frost, turn the world into a pageant of colour, and make even gay things dull by contrast. The streams run red as blood with their fallen leaves. The land is dressed in its rich brocade of autumn.

The Autumn comes from the West, the Japanese say, and on Western-sloping hills there are the Maples set to catch the very last gleam. All the poets have a word to tell us about it, for next to Spring it is their favourite theme. One says—

“Like far-off smoke upon the hill-side lies  
The purple haze of Autumn, pale and chill:  
Is it the blazing Maples, whose flame dies,  
And trailing off in smoke would linger still?”

November has brought the Chrysanthemum, and its fête day, of Emperor and common people, but the true Autumn flowers “are the Maple leaves, little fiery hands of babies, loved and cherished by a nation, themselves still delightfully, divinely, children.”

<sup>1</sup> It is the good Rein, I think, who says that only the wild flowers of the Mississippi Valley can surpass, in variety and beauty, the flora of Japan, but although early affection for Arkansas and Missouri wild flowers would prejudice me in their favour, I am sure Japan can boast more (Sir Joseph Hooker bears me out in this, I see). Indeed, it must be so, for she has almost all the American plants and trees, and those of China, Formosa, and Manchuria as well,—temperate, tropic, even Alpine or Arctic flowers.

## IV. WINTER

"Flowers blossom and then fall. The flower-like snow  
Falls first and blossoms later."—BARON TAKASAKI  
(Translated by ARTHUR LLOYD)

The year is not dead and shrouded with the coming of the Winter and the snow. Late into November the Maple's glory lasts, like a fiery sunset, burning itself slowly out. Bass and Birch trees, turned warm, sunny yellow, eke out the meagre noon sunlight, too, with their ochre and saffron leaves. Oaks, heavily clad in russet, velvety brown, or sienna garments, keep their warmth of colouring past December, while the *Cryptomeria* trees change to such a rich bronze that the other dark which evergreens give the landscape is nullified. The 'Iron Creeper' (*Kadsura japonica*), which has stems as thick and nearly as strong as steel-wire hawsers, clings to its brownish red foliage as long as possible. And there is plenty of green left—Laurels, of all sorts, glossy and well-groomed looking; Fir trees and Junipers, Mosses and Ivy, and the constant Bamboo. There is real colour, too, in the winter berries: *Nandina domestica*, known (along with several other plants) as the 'Holly of the Orient,' has brilliant red fruit, like the true home sort, but with leaves not prickly and intractable, though glossy and decorative. Another variety has orange balls, and is handsome, though not

so appealing. There is Mistletoe, too (so kissing is not unknown in Japan—among foreigners, at least); but it must be picked young, as the berries, which are at first waxy white like ours, change later to yellow, and finally to a reddish orange. There are many other winter berries, deep red, black, dark purple, pale greeny white; and the brown seed-pods of various plants are interesting and beautiful in design and harmony of tone.

All these things, far into the winter, provide food for the birds, glowing flecks of colour to the shrubberies, and variety and a sense of cheer to the bleak outlook. But I should not use the word 'bleak,' or suggest that to me, any more than to the Japanese, does the country look dreary or forlorn at this season. The air is sharp and keen, not damp and raw, as it may be later on—that is, earlier in the new year. The exquisite tracery of twigs—like the tiny musical notes that go to make up one of the great harmonies of Nature—are seen then at their best. The purply gloom beneath the trees is as satisfying as the green of summer; the buds, rounded and reddening, give the world a tender charm, even at its harshest moment of cold. Then there is time to look at the mellow tints of cryptic markings on tree-trunks; at the delicate silver lichens encrusting them, like the exquisite filigree work of Mexico; to learn to find the pregnant beauty of common









WHITE CAMELLIAS AT DEMO VARI  
TOKIO



everyday things, which we are so used to that we forget to admire—as, when guests are gone, we may look again at the home faces that are dear to us.

With the snow there is no sense of the shroud—rather the Western notion of bridal finery. The poets love it; the Court writes verses on it; the boys delight in it; the common people, pinched with cold in paper-and-wood houses, leave their charcoal *hibachi* to go out to admire it.

“’Tis the first snow,  
Just enough to bend  
The Gladiolus leaves.<sup>1</sup>

’Tis the first snow,  
Yet some one is indoors:  
Who can it be?”

The garden now is transformed, glorified; each rounded hill is sheeted, the loved shape beneath softly covered, but discernible, as of a woman sleeping. The stone lantern, shaped for such a time low and flat, crouches like a gnome with a magic umbrella, or like a great white mushroom in a garden of ghosts. The little bamboo summer-house is made of marble now, and the well-cover and gateway too are of fairy marble, unstained by time and storm. The Plum tree blooms, even before its early season. Each twig and branch is weighed

<sup>1</sup> *Bashō*, translated by W. G. Aston

down as with flowers, as the Japanese say—the Flowers of the Snow.

To one who loves them it is hard to say when they are best, these Japanese gardens: pearly with spring, green and cool in the heat of summer, ardent and flaming with the exhilaration of autumn, or pure and undefiled in winter snow. Each time, each season has its message, its particular excellence, and we find in the garden, beautiful or dull, fair or grim, that which is already in our own hearts. We may search the world for beauty, for tranquillity, for joy, and search in vain, unless we take it with us on our travels in the strong box of our own souls. In every garden in Japan those three things are planted, and we may enjoy them as freely as their owners, if we have the sun in our hearts to make the flowers bloom.

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